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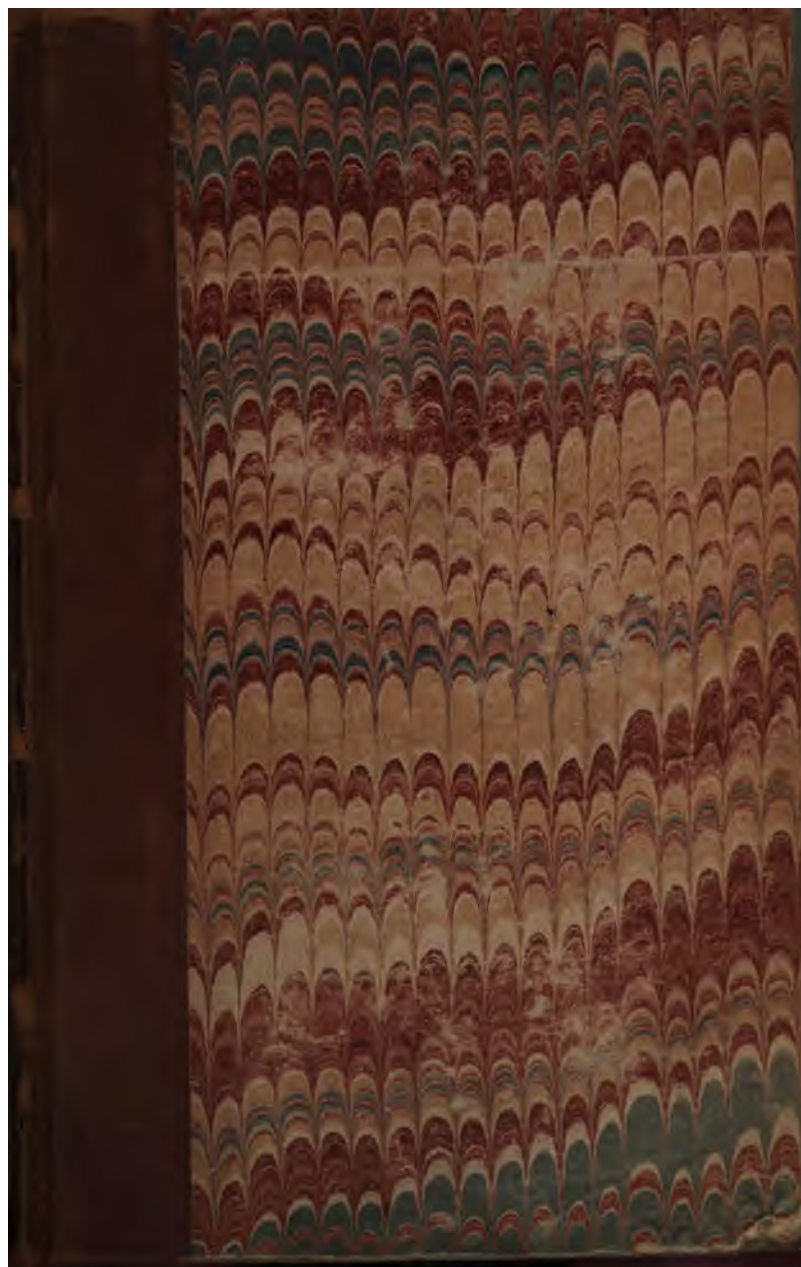
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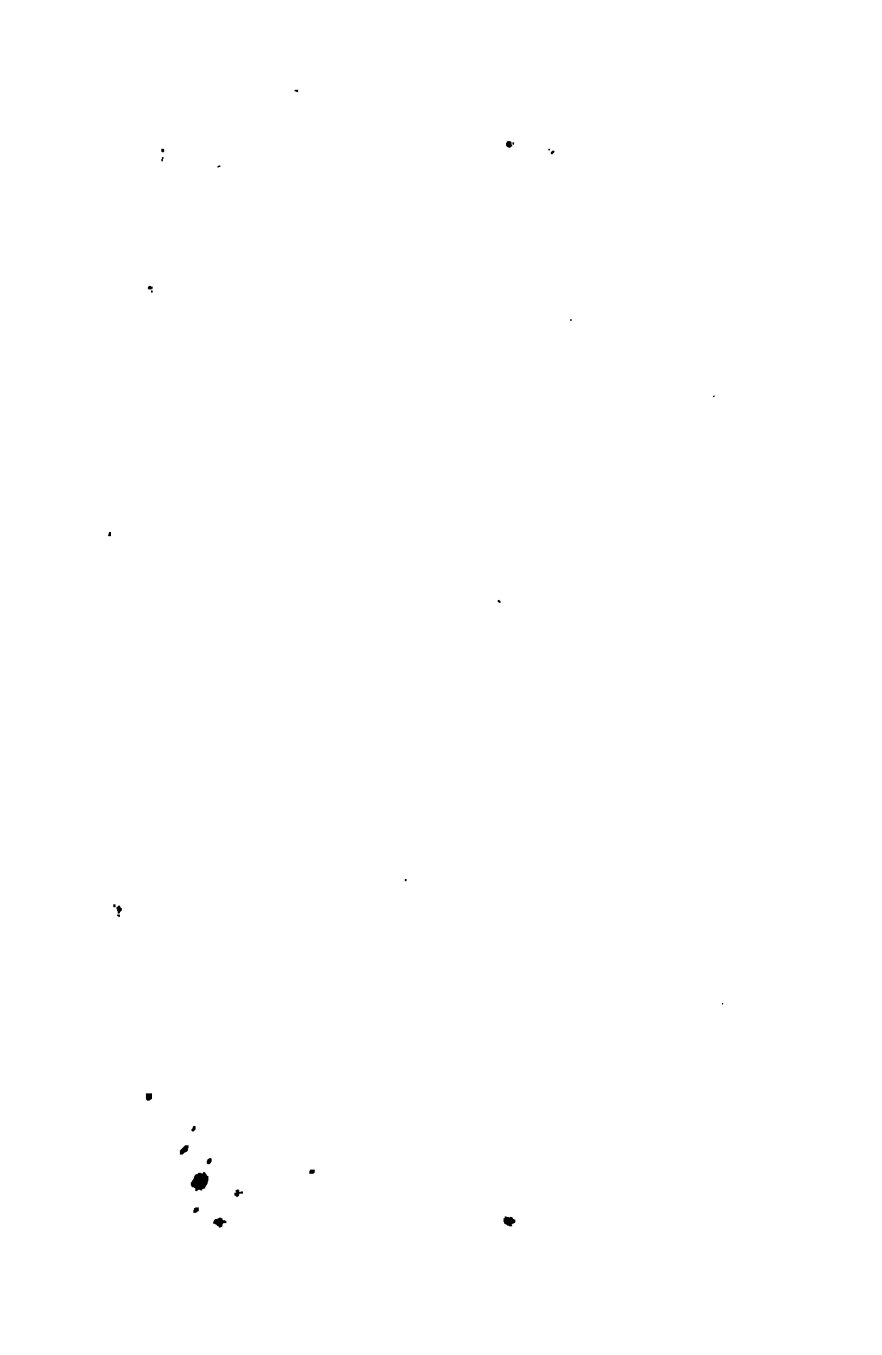
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# LORD PALMERSTON.

A Biography.

BY

JOHN M'GILCHRIST.

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# LIFE OF LORD PALMERSTON.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.—THE TEMPLES; THEIR PLACE IN ENGLISH HISTORY.

FOR a contemporary writer to compose and lay before the public a biography of the man who is not only his foremost compatriot, but the most illustrious and prominent living character of the age, is a task which ought to be approached and executed at once with the deepest diffidence and the keenest conscientiousness. Lord Palmerston, a brief and compendious memoir of whom is contained in the following pages, has probably done more to mould the political character of the Old and of the New World than any man now living, and, with the exception of the Great Napoleon, than any man who has lived in the nineteenth century. Above all (and we are by no means unmindful of the magnificent services of Palmerston's great master, Canning), he has done more than any of his contemporaries at once to magnify the name of his dearly-loved land, to maintain her standing in the face of the universal globe, and to extend to other countries who were feeling their way to the possession of blessings similar to those enjoyed by her, that glorious heritage of freedom of which England is at once *the example and the donor*. Carefully, indeed, should he



prepare himself for the task of narrating, ever so compendiously, the life, and the life's doings, of a man who dealt, in his earlier days, the last doughty and decisive blow at the unholy "Holy Alliance," and in his later years broke the spirit, and prostrated the ambition of the modern Tamerlane of the frozen North—the Czar Nicholas. Candid and temperate should he be who has to develop the gradual ripening and liberality of view of one who commenced life, when scarcely out of his teens, as the colleague of Castlereagh, and the civil director of the campaigns of Wellington and Blücher, and who has lived, when almost an octogenarian, to support the finance of Gladstone and the sweeping free trade of Cobden, and to participate, as premier of his country, in the laurels won by Raglan and Havelock. A public life commencing with Walcheren and Copenhagen, and not yet ended while the battles of the Virginian Wilderness and the capture of the Virginian capital have engrossed the attention of Christendom, would require, to do it full justice, a biographer with pen almost as unmatched as the splendour of the genius of the subject of his narrative.

To such qualifications no claim can be made. But this, at least, may be urged, without aught of confidence or arrogance, that so far as a feeling of reverence, and glad and patriotic gratitude, fits the narrator for his self-undertaken task—so far as a deep sense of admiration for the greatest of English Ministers, or at least the one with whom only Chatham and Canning are worthy to rank, may be considered to confer any ability for the task—to that at least we may lay claim. And this, indeed, is no boast, for it is a feeling in which all Lord Palmerston's fellow-subjects, of all ages, ranks, and parties, save occasionally a hot enthusiast or splenetic detractor, equally participate. And the wonder of his universal popularity increases when its rare attendant circumstances are considered. Second in the number of his years to but one of the great surviving statesmen who, in the ranks of both the great parties of the State, have been his compeers and combatants, he is nevertheless the universal idol of the young, and the most jubilant and hilarious of our public men. Though one of the first to enrol himself in the Free Trade ranks, he has long since arrived at that stage of human life which has, by general human experience and consent, been set down as the period beyond which

there ceases to exist any disposition for daring innovation; and yet no one more gallantly than he introduced and defended those recent sweeping fiscal re-arrangements, which almost startled their warmest youthful supporters by their magnitude, and the uncertainty of the results of their experimental character, but which are rapidly doubling the wealth of the nation. Having outlived by a score of years that term of human existence when quiet and repose usually become the very necessities of life, no one more assiduously than he discharges the duties of Cabinet and Senate; no one more joyfully, or gracefully, dispenses the amenities of social intercourse; and, greatest wonder of all, no one more keenly enjoys, no one with more alacrity engages in, the keen warfare of a satire divested of all sting of acerbity; no one rains so weightily a shower of argument and ridicule upon an opponent; no one with greater gallantry and chivalry protects a friend from aspersion, or an ally from defeat.

To narrate with compendious brevity the leading incidents of the life of this great and good man, especially as these have been for half a century interwoven with the history of England and the world, is the object we propose to ourselves, and the achievement of which we inaugurate by a brief enumeration of a few of the leading particulars of his ancestry and family connections. For we know that even those who least dearly love a lord, desire to know some little, at least, of the stock from which so noble and worthy an offshoot has sprung.

Every link in the chain of Lord Palmerston's pedigree is not forthcoming; and even were it so, it would be above the scale and beyond the purpose of this work to insert each one.

Anthony, the second son of Peter Temple, lord of the manors of Stowe and Marston-Boteler in Henry VIII.'s time, is the direct ancestor of Lord Palmerston, by a chain all whose links are complete, and many of them worthy of notice. Anthony's son, Sir William Temple, Knight, was a true representative of the typical hero of that most splendid epoch of English history, the Elizabethan. He represented at once its learning, its courtesy, its bravery, and its knowledge of affairs. After leaving the University, he became the secretary of Sir Philip Sidney. Essex also in turn employed him as his secretary until he met his own tragic fate—a stroke which

seemed disastrous to Temple also, for he lost all prospects of advancement at court, and was obliged to retire into Ireland to escape the resentment of Cecil, who, not content with the vengeance wreaked on Essex, extended his animosity to all his adherents.

Sir William Temple's eldest son, John, was also knighted. He filled for a series of years high and confidential places in the government of Ireland—Master of the Rolls, Privy Councillor, Joint Commissioner of the Great Seal, and Vice-Treasurer of Ireland. He, like his father, and like his eldest son, Sir William Temple, came before the public as an author.

Sir John's eldest son, the deliciously contemplative Sir William Temple, best known to the ordinary reader as the friend and patron of Swift, was Lord Palmerston's great great grand-uncle; Lord Palmerston being descended from Sir William's younger brother, Sir John.

Very little now remains to be said ere we come down in the stream of time to Lord Palmerston himself; for the immediate lineal ancestors of the Premier were not in any way distinguished. Sir John Temple, Sir William's next brother, and the ancestor of Lord Palmerston, was a man of but slight note. He was successively Solicitor and Attorney-General and Speaker of the House of Commons in Ireland. By his marriage, the first Irish blood, very little of which flows in Lord Palmerston's veins, was introduced into the family, but probably no Celt. One of Sir John's sons was the first member of the family who attained the honour of the peerage since the old days of the Algars and Leofriks, Earls of Mercia and Chester, who are set down by the genealogists as ancestors of Lord Palmerston. His son, Henry, was created a peer of Ireland by the titles of Viscount Palmerston, of Palmerston, in the county of Dublin, and Baron Temple, both in the peerage of Ireland. He again, of whom we glean nothing save the bare facts of his birth, marriage, and death, married an Irish-born lady, and left, among other issue, a son, who, dying before his father, never succeeded to the title. This son left male issue. The second viscount, accordingly, was the grandson of the first peer. He succeeded his grandfather in the year 1757. By his first wife, the daughter of a Cheshire baronet, he had no issue. He married a second time. The story of his *second marriage, which we present merely as a story, for*

we have not been able to authenticate it by any authority which amounts to anything approaching to certainty, is the following:—It is said that the viscount, after his bereavement of his first wife, was riding on horseback through the streets of Dublin and was thrown, and one of his limbs fractured. He was carried into an adjacent house, and upon medical assistance being summoned, it was found that it would be dangerous or fatal to have him removed. The house was occupied by a respectable hatter in middling circumstances. The hatter's daughter undertook the task of nursing the injured peer. The consequence of her attentions was that they fell in love with each other, and the result was their marriage. This lady became the mother of the great English premier. We repeat, we cannot at all vouch for the accuracy of this gossip; but, to say the least, a colourable possibility is lent to it by the fact that in the *Peerages*, and in such temporary authorities and chroniclers of aristocratic doings as the *Gentleman's Magazine*, no further reference is made to the second wife of the second Viscount Palmerston, than that her name was Mary Mee, and that of her father Benjamin Mee. In the absence of all allusion to her family connections, the inference is almost if not quite inevitable that the lady was of obscure birth. Mary Mee became a peeress in the right of her husband, by her marriage, on the 7th of January, 1783. Sir Henry John Temple, Knight of the Garter, General Commander of the Bath, was the first-born of her marriage, his natal day being the 20th of October, 1784. He was born on English soil, Broadlands, in Hampshire, his father's English seat, having the honour of his nativity. So Lord Palmerston himself wrote it down at the census of 1861.

Lord Palmerston had one brother and two sisters, all of whom are dead. His brother, who died in 1856, was Sir William Temple, the well-known scholar, antiquary, and connoisseur, who held for many years the position of English minister at the court of the Neapolitan Bourbons.

Many incidental facts connected with the direct genealogical tree, and the collateral offshoots of the pedigree of Lord Palmerston, are worthy of passing notice. The necessity of brevity will not permit us to insert a tithe of them. Fuller tells us, in his "*Worthies of England*," that Lady Temple, wife of one of the Temples, of Stowe, *saw ere she died seven hundred of her descendants.*

Sir Richard Temple, of Stowe, was a good military commander, under Marlborough. He was created Viscount Cobham, with remainder, in default of male issue, to his sister, who, marrying Mr. Grenville, was afterwards created Countess Temple, and became the progenitress of the great ruling family of the Grenvilles.

The Temple blood is also amalgamated with the ducal family of Buckingham and Chandos. Uniting with the plebeian but illustrious blood of the Sheridans, it will be fused among the descendants of the present Duke of Somerset, of the Hon. Mrs. Norton, and of the witty and wit-loving Lord Dufferin. And away in Cumberland, the descendants of Lord Palmerston's late astute colleague, Sir James Graham, will have blended in their veins the blood of the author of the *School for Scandal*, of the literate secretary of Sidney and Essex, and of the old Graemes, the terror of the Scottish border.

The one point which is noticeable above all others, in taking a final retrospective view of the pedigree of Lord Palmerston, is the fact that he is an Irishman only in name. Not one hundredth part of the blood that flows in his veins is Irish. And we doubt if a drop of even that is Milesian or Celtic. Only three intermarriages, out of some scores that we have traced, were alliances contracted by ancestors of Lord Palmerston with ladies born on Irish soil or of Irish-born parents.

The Palmerston branch of the Temple family, although obtaining their peerage from Ireland, and for services rendered in connection with Ireland, are in precisely the same position as probably half of the existing Irish noble families. They represent an English family who went, in the service of the State, to Ireland to seek their fortunes. They found it, and adhered to Ireland and to the emoluments of public employment and status there. But they remained a Saxo-Norman race. The only difference between the case of the Temples, and those of such families longer settled in the Green Isle than themselves—as the Geraldines, the De Burghs, and the De la Poer Beresfords—simply consists in this, that the pedigree of the Temples is distinguished by a much smaller infusion, through later marriage, of native Irish blood, than any other noble family that our historical

English dominancy in Ireland has established in that ancient conquest of the English crown.

Lord Palmerston is as eminently by his blood, as by his sentiments, an Englishman.



## CHAPTER II.

LORD PALMERSTON'S EARLY TRAINING:—CHILDHOOD, SCHOOL,  
AND COLLEGE.

A.D. 1784—1805.

**T**HE task of writing the biographies of certain of the great English statesmen of the nineteenth century is comparatively easy. In writing the lives of persons who have lived contemporaneously, or almost contemporaneously, with the writers and the readers of their biographies, the two chief difficulties are attendant upon the earlier and the latter days of the subjects of the portraiture. The latter days are so very near the actual period when the writer writes and the reader reads, that historic perspective has not yet begun to apply; and no accurate political information is more difficult to get at than that which concerns the decade or bi-decade of years which immediately precedes the period of composition and publication; for obvious considerations of propriety and taste forbid the presenting to the public of those diaries and memoirs which are at once the essence and the source of modern history, until the political actors described and criticised in them have passed away.

We know more now of the real history of the reign of George III. and of its motive springs, than we know of the reign of Queen Victoria. Newspapers and other current and immature—and, therefore, unreliable and often erroneous—instruments of information, are our only authorities. And newspapers, though they reflect very well the general social features of an age, are necessarily but very fallacious guides to the secret purposes of policy, the deliberations of cabinets, and the rivalries of the athletes on the political arena.

We know more to-day of the peculiar relations of Pitt

to Addington's Administration—we are better acquainted with the real facts about the scandals affecting the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke, or Queen Caroline and Sir Sidney Smith, than we are with the bedchamber intrigue against Sir Robert Peel, or the sudden extrusion of Palmerston from the Foreign Office at the time of the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon.

Similarly, there is frequently a difficulty in tracing reliable and interesting particulars about the earlier stages of the lives of certain aged contemporary or recently deceased statesmen. This is the more to be regretted that it is the prevailing fashion of modern biography—and it is a very just and natural one—to dwell with especial copiousness upon the earlier years of the lives of men who have made themselves distinguished in the world. The motto of modern biographers would seem to be—

“The child is father of the man.”

In the case of the majority of the men who have guided the policy of England since the commencement of the century, this legitimate curiosity can be fairly gratified. The great Tory leaders—Pitt, Addington, Castlereagh, Eldon—and even such of their secondary henchmen as George Rose, have had their lives written either by relatives or by professional men of letters, who were permitted access to authentic materials for the record of their inner personal lives. And the pure Whigs, whether of the old Grenville family connection, or the Holland House coquetters with Democracy and Bonapartism, or of the *Edinburgh Review* school, which gave to the party such welcome recruitment of new blood, have all had their lives written by one another. With a fine fraternity, which is in some respects admirable—and in others ludicrous—but, though ludicrous, none the less valuable for historic and biographic purposes—the reformers who struck in their early days for retrenchment, peace, religious liberty, legal, political, and penal reform, in the calm and well-earned leisure of their declining years took to writing and magnifying their own lives, and eulogizing the careers of their coadjutors.

The future historians of the former half of this century will be doubly indebted to the Broughams, Romillys,

Horners, Cockburns, and Russells—indebted at once to their political activity for the incidents they will have to record, and to their autobiographic and other compositions for the best means of recording them.

It is unfortunate for our present purpose that Lord Palmerston never really belonged in full to either of the rival parties. Starting at first under the Tory banner, he was never quite a Tory; spending the latter half of his life in the Whig camp, he never came near to the stereotyped pattern of the Whig shibboleth. Hansard, the Blue Books, the memoirs of foreign diplomatists, like Metternich, Nesselrode, and Guizot, are in much larger degree the available sources whence Palmerston's biographer must draw his materials, than the hosts of diaries and gossiping biographies to which every modern publishing season furnishes so considerable an addition.

A very few sentences will suffice to contain all that we have to say about Palmerston up till the time when he left school. Of his earlier education, until he was sent to Harrow, we know nothing. And of the years that he spent at Harrow, we know hardly anything more than this:—Captain Gronow, of the Guards, whose amusing reminiscences of his own family formed a very popular book just at the time when Palmerston, in his hale and hearty octogenarianism, was so admirably maintaining the neutrality of England amid the shoals and quicksands of the American civil war, records that, at Harrow, "Byron hated Palmerston, but liked Peel." And the chatty captain innocently adds in the immediate context a further sentence which entirely denudes Byron's "hatred" of Palmerston of the slightest disparaging weight. He adds—"Byron thought that the whole world ought to be constantly engaged in admiring his poetry and himself." This *naïve* phrase hits off Byron to a nicety.

The world, which has nowadays much more unaffected reality and earnestness of character, though much less spasm and dramatic self-consciousness than it had in Byron's time, is pretty well convinced of the arrant intellectual foppishness of that illustrious poet of the second rank. We are glad that Byron is recorded to have hated young Temple at Harrow. The "hatred," indeed, may have arisen from the relative positions of the



two young peers. Palmerston was Byron's senior by six years; and in a public school, in which fagging prevailed in an unmitigated form, the occasion of the "hatred" can be easily imagined. But, setting that aside, Byron and Palmerston (that is to say, if the boy Palmerston bore any resemblance to the man Palmerston, as we have known him) were precisely the men not to understand and appreciate each other. One essential feature of Palmerston's character all throughout has been an absolute and incredulous scepticism of, and disgust at, any form of self-conscious conceit. He could not understand a person who was for ever fancying himself a ridiculous Corsair or Childe Harold, who affected amours that did not exist, that he might be thought a desperate Lovelace; and, above all, who put his head in curl-papers to make it Antinous-like, who could not bear to see a hungry lady eat a mutton-chop, and who himself dined on ship-biscuit and soda-water, that he might ward off the dreaded vulgarity of obesity.

The best proof that Palmerston was warmly appreciated at school by his contemporaries there, who were of an ordinary men-of-the-world and sensible way of thinking, is the fact of his early welcome into public life—a welcome which must necessarily have been prepared for him by many of his Harrow contemporaries.

Cambridge University is the natural and established complement of Harrow School. But Palmerston did not go direct from one to the other. His father wisely determined to interpose between the termination of his training at an English public school and an English University, a year or two's attendance at the lectures delivered at the Scottish University, which was jointly founded by the first Stuart king of England and the Town-council of his northern capital. Wisely, we say, did the father thus determine in his son's interest; for the University of Edinburgh was then at the very summit of its fame and efficiency. There has been so much nauseous and fulsome reiteration of the "glories" of Edinburgh under Dugald Stewart, Playfair, Leslie, and Dalzell, by the brood of *Edinburgh Reviewers* who have so persistently blown the trumpets of each other and of their training-ground, that there is a strong temptation to fall into the opposite extreme, and to deny altogether the

merits which have been blazoned with an excess so redundant, and a tediousness so wearisome.

The Scotch—or, at least, the section of them to whom we refer—are a peculiarly self-assertive people, and too impatient to allow other people to discover the merits which they themselves proclaim with a haste at once indecent and premature. They had a short season of great literary glory—glory in all fields, in science, mental and physical, in poetry, romance, history, theology, and belles lettres.

It commenced with Hutcheson, and ended with Sir Walter Scott; such stragglers as Chalmers, Christopher North, and Sir William Hamilton, bringing up the rear-guard, and surviving until dates comparatively near to our own times. Hume, Read, Thomas Brown, Adam Smith, Burns, Scott, Dugald Stewart, Robertson, Lockhart, and a few others are the illustrious names of this admirable literary era. But with such salient exceptions as Hume, Scott, and Burns, each of whom was the absolute master over all rivals of all the world and of all time in his own field, most of the others were but highly commendable mediocrities. Robertson falls far below the modern standard of historical acumen, and his style proves as palling on full acquaintance as it is dazzling and attractive at first.

Thomas Brown was rather a fine poesy-inspired *littérateur*, discoursing about the phenomenon of the mind and its emotions, than a mental philosopher in the real sense of the term.

John Wilson was the prince of appreciative critics in certain fields, but deficient in others.

One half of the Ettrick Shepherd's compositions are as preposterous and idiotic as the other half are distinguished by their weird beauty or their exquisitely harmonious attainments to every chord of Nature.

Lockhart was rather an accomplished scholar and gentleman, and the superior even of Boswell as a biographer, than a man with high pretensions to genius.

We have been thus particular in defining an exact estimate of the worth of the great era of Scottish literary greatness, on which the Scotch have been complacently and lazily depasturing themselves for the last thirty years or so, because we are aware that much has been made of

the couple of years that Palmerston spent in Edinburgh by certain Scottish or philo-Scottish writers. He has been ranked among the especial school whom Dugald Stewart sent forth to take part in public affairs, imbued with his notions and training—the Broughams, Horners, Lansdownes, Russells, Jeffreys, Cockburns, &c. The discipline of Dugald Stewart, and other local influences at Edinburgh, *did* form a school of politicians.

Its members had solved all the mysteries of government, and elaborated a complete and self-consistent and irrefragable plan of polity ere they had attained their majorities.

Their subsequent public careers simply embodied the attempts to reduce to practice the system which they had imbibed and assimilated in their early youth. Allow for a slight imported *souppçon* of Benthamism, and one or two minor addenda, and the fully-fledged Whig of the Earl Russell type differed in no respect in his old age from the young self-confident Lord John Russell listening and taking notes in Stewart's Moral Philosophy class-room.

With Palmerston it has been entirely otherwise: he never was a system-monger. He never, in his whole career, uttered categorically and completely his full political creed. He was essentially a statesman and administrator, without the smallest infusion of doctrinairism. So far as he may be considered the disciple of other men, and the advocate and propagandist of their opinions, it is to Parliament and not to College that we must look if we wish to discover his political apprenticeship and novitiate. It was the green benches of St. Stephen's, not the hard wooden forms of the College class-room in the South Bridge of Edinburgh, seated in which he received his rudimentary lessons in politics. It was in the seclusion of the Admiralty and War Offices, not the privacy of his Edinburgh lodgings, that he prepared himself for statesmanship. Castlereagh, Grattan, but emphatically Canning, were his masters, not the bland and plausible professors of that northern capital, where no mystery of the mind is admitted to be a sealed book, and where the chart of the brain and its functions is glibly mapped out with as much nice detail of frontier as would satisfy the most painstaking geographer.

We must not, however, be understood as either denying or depreciating the excellent and salutary influence which must have been exercised upon young Mr. Temple's mind by the prelections of the Edinburgh professor of ethics and political economy. And the pupil had more than usual opportunities of benefiting by intercourse with his master, for he not only attended his lectures, but was a resident in his house. Private intercourse deepened and cemented the impressions made in the class-room. Especially would it appear that in the field of political economy, which was at that date somewhat arbitrarily united with ethics in the Edinburgh professorial system, Lord Palmerston benefited by Stewart's teaching. Dugald Stewart's lectures on political economy were never published until many years after his death, when they were included in the library edition of his complete works, which Sir William Hamilton edited, until his death prevented the completion of the task. The erudite editor had some difficulty in procuring an authentic manuscript transcript of the lectures, for Stewart had never written them completely out; depending rather on extemporaneous prelection, assisted by somewhat scanty notes. The copy from which Sir William Hamilton's edition was actually printed was made up of the notes taken in the class-room by various of Stewart's students; and by far the most valuable assistance that Sir William derived in his editorial task, was from the note-book of Lord Palmerston. He had taken down the lectures in short-hand, and then written them out in full. Indeed, we believe that the larger bulk of the lectures, as they are now published, were taken *verbatim* by the printers from manuscript in Lord Palmerston's handwriting. This one circumstance is proof enough at once of the high esteem in which Palmerston, when a young man at Edinburgh, held Stewart's lectures, and of the considerable influence which they must have exerted in the formation of his mental character.

Palmerston was five years younger than Brougham and Horner, and by a still greater disparity of years the junior of Jeffrey, Sidney Smith, and others of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*. Palmerston, however, formed their acquaintance. He became a member

of the Speculative Debating Society; but an examination of its minute-books discovers the fact that he was but an occasional attendant at its meetings, and a still more infrequent participator in its proceedings.

The discipline of a Scottish University furnishes neither the exact and orderly training, nor does it bestow upon its alumni the same social stamp and advantages as those conferred by attendance at the ancient and more amply equipped academical institutions of England. Lord Palmerston, senior, would seem to have been fully alive to this. He had determined to send his son to complete the usual course at Cambridge. Just about the time that his son passed from the shores of the Forth to the banks of the Cam, he was suddenly removed by death; but the young peer fulfilled his father's injunctions, and duly graduated, after keeping his terms, at St. John's College.

The elder Palmerston died in April, 1802. His death was of a very painful character. In the contemporary obituary notice of the *Gentleman's Magazine* it is thus described:—"His Lordship died of what the faculty terms an ossified throat; in consequence of which he must inevitably have been starved to death for want of nourishment, had he not been relieved from so dreadful a calamity by an earlier dissolution." Lord Palmerston's mother survived her husband about three years. Neither of his parents survived to see their son in parliament. They had both passed away by the time he attained his majority. His father, although not emulous of public distinction, seems to have been a man of sufficient weight and ability to be selected to fill at least one public office. In the exercise of the exceptional privilege which permits Irish peers to solicit the suffrages of English constituencies, he represented successively the boroughs of Eastloe, Boroughbridge, and Winchester. He had been appointed one of the Commissioners of the Admiralty in 1766, when the Duke of Grafton, supported by Chatham, accepted the seals which had been resigned by Lord Rockingham. We believe, although we are unable to furnish specific pecuniary details, that Lord Palmerston inherited but an inconsiderable patrimony—that is, for his position as a nobleman of the second grade in the peerage. We incline to the belief that his inheritance just amounted to that

happy medium of competency which in England a young aspirant to political preferment and the responsibilities of statesmanship, especially if he be of rank, is greatly bettered by possessing. Rightly or wrongly, Englishmen never take kindly to public men who are either devoid or but slenderly possessed of private means. Some of the finest intellects that have ever in England dedicated themselves, with patriotic fervour and honourable ambition, to a public career, have been cut to the quick by the taunt of "political adventurer," cruelly applied by unscrupulous and envious opponents, and foolishly swallowed by an obtuse and sordid mob. Lord Palmerston started with just enough means to maintain his social position, and to render it impossible that the emoluments of any office should be of so much account to him as materially to affect his political course. On the other hand, his means were so moderate as to preclude the temptations of sloth and indulgence to which so many peers and men of fortune have succumbed at all stages of our parliamentary history, after they had given brilliant early promise of that future distinction and public serviceableness, to the attainment of which constant self-restraint and as constant hard work constitute the inevitable *sine qua non*,—inevitable to rich dukes as well as to penniless demagogues. Lord Palmerston's father left the best of patrimonies—an admirable training, sufficiency of this world's goods to render his son independent, little enough of them to add to that extraordinary natural vivacity of character and liking for work which always characterized him, the additional stimulus furnished by a moderate possession and enjoyment of wealth.

The terms that Palmerston kept at Cambridge would seem to have passed in a somewhat more perfunctory manner than his two years' study at Edinburgh. Cambridge, like Oxford, was at this period in a somewhat low state of academic efficiency. That Palmerston's undergraduate career, however, must have been respectable and noteworthy, is sufficiently indicated by the fact that he had hardly graduated ere he offered himself to the University as a candidate for its parliamentary representation. Palmerston never was a fool, and he never showed foolish presumption. Nor was he ever an attitudinizing man—performing bold and *outré* feats merely to have himself

talked about. The mere fact of his standing for Cambridge, therefore, although he was unsuccessful in the first instance, is proof sufficient that he was conscious of having secured a considerable amount of respect during the three years of his residence in St. John's.



### CHAPTER III.

FIRST YEARS IN PARLIAMENT.—MAIDEN SPEECH.

A.D. 1806—1808.

**L**ORD PALMERSTON entered Parliament and public life at one of the most eventful crises of English history. Just half of the Titanic war which we waged with revolutionary and Bonapartist France had been waged. The nation had been taxed to the exertion of warlike energies which infinitely surpassed all her previous efforts—exceeding even the strain put upon us when, in the Seven Years' war with the great Frederick as our only ally, we had to fight all Europe; or when our rebellious American colonies secured against us the armed assistance of France, Spain, and Holland.

When Palmerston entered Parliament, Bonaparte had nearly the whole of Europe at his feet. Our own king's ancient possession of Hanover was in the power of the usurper. Austerlitz had humbled Austria in the dust, and Prussia seemed for ever extinguished at Jena. At Tilsit, the patriarchal Czar and the democratic Emperor had partitioned Europe. The only ray of hope that illumined the general gloom was shed by the glorious victory of Trafalgar. Shortly ere Palmerston became an M.P., Trafalgar had been won, Nelson had gloriously fallen in the arms of victory, and his lieutenant, Collingwood, had been rewarded by the loud acclaim of all England with his peerage and pension. Holland, Italy, Spain, Bavaria, Austria, Prussia might be at the conqueror's feet; Denmark and Russia might have been *cojoled into fatal complicity* with his projects; Sweden

and Portugal might be threatened by the fell genius of his aggression ; but our old mastery of the sea was still in our hands. The tricolor waved on shore in the place of many trampled national banners of proud dynasties and ancient peoples, but the Union Jack floated triumphant o'er the main—we were the unchallenged freeholders of the deep.

The epoch was important too and eminently transitional in respect of domestic politics. In the same year as that which made Palmerston a legislator Pitt died, heart-broken by the crushing news of Austerlitz ; and just after Fox had carried the abolition of the slave trade, Pitt's mighty rival followed him to the invisible land. Sheridan, Tierney, and Windham alone survived of the intellectual giants who had ruled England before the war and in its earlier stages. Canning, Castlereagh, Vansittart, Huskisson were just unfolding their powers, and reaping the first-fruits of their greatness. Meteor-Brougham was just completing the eating of his dinners in the hall of Lincoln's Inn, and did not find a seat for some four years after. Wellington had not yet turned politician, and Peel had not yet taken his "double first" at Oxford.

Palmerston, when he was just turned twenty-one, contended, in the ministerial interest, the representation of Cambridge University against Lord Henry Petty (afterwards Lord Lansdowne), who stood as an old Whig of the Grenville school, with a slight flavour of *Edinburgh Review* utilitarianism and "political philosophy." The contest was sharp and hotly conducted. Lord Henry was successful. Palmerston soon after was returned for the pocket borough of Bletchingley. This was in the year 1806.

Once in Parliament, he contented himself with listening for some time and becoming accustomed to the atmosphere of the place, ere he opened his lips. But from the first he was a man marked by men in office and singled out for public employment. His University reputation had preceded him. A man only twenty-one who had ventured to stand for the representation of his University, and who had run his successful adversary very closely, was certain to be regarded with attention when he entered the House. His manners were unassuming and modest. To casual observers his worth would have been concealed by his *unobtrusiveness*. To men of sagacity it only made his



merits the more conspicuous. "One or two discerned the natural gifts of the administrator in that easy deportment which most men mistook for levity and carelessness."

When he entered Parliament, the political party opposed to that with which he had identified himself was in power. The death of Pitt had disorganized the party of which he was head. They resigned. Their places were filled by the Whigs, Lord Grenville being Premier, Fox Foreign Secretary, and Erskine Chancellor. The king never liked his new counsellors, to whose elevation he had submitted reluctantly and with bad grace. Fox's death greatly weakened them, and the king gladly availed himself of the first opportunity to get quit of his surviving colleagues.

At the instance of the Grenville cabinet, both Houses of Parliament had passed through all its stages a bill for the enfranchisement of the Roman Catholics from their disability to hold places of trust under government. The bill was brought in due course before the king to receive his assent. He refused to sign it, alleging that he could not do so without violating his coronation oath; and not content with this refusal, he demanded of his ministers a solemn declaration that they would never again introduce such a measure. With this, of course, they could not comply. They resigned, and the king again sent for the Tories. The Duke of Portland was Premier, and other friends of Pitt—Perceval, Castlereagh, Canning, and Liverpool—received the other portfolios. Lord Palmerston, if we can trust *Hansard*, had never yet opened his lips in Parliament. Nevertheless, he was included in the new arrangements; he was gazetted as Junior Lord of the Admiralty.

An early and an excellent opportunity was furnished him, in connection with the business of his own department, of making his maiden speech. Early in August, 1807, an English military and naval force, under the command of Lords Cathcart and Gambier, had been despatched on a specific errand to Copenhagen. We were at peace with Denmark, but it was well known that the Danish court leant to the cause of Napoleon, and it was equally well known that it was the Emperor's intention to seize the Danish fleet and use it against the *English*. Under the circumstances, it seemed to the

ministry that they would be justified in anticipating Bonaparte's intention, and putting it out of his power, by the most effectual means, to replace the vessels that Villeneuve had lost at Trafalgar, by possessing himself of the war ships of the Danes. Once anchored in the Sound, Gambier and Cathcart sent to the King of Denmark offering him the protection of England against the designs of France. Their proposal was rejected, and the English at once proceeded to land their forces, amounting to thirty thousand men. They advanced to the walls of Copenhagen, and ere proceeding to more overt acts of hostility they explained their position and purpose in a proclamation of singular temperateness. They demanded that the Danes should surrender all their ships and naval stores. This Denmark refused, and Copenhagen was at once bombarded. The city capitulated after three days, and the English demand was complied with in full. All private property was restored, and every prisoner released.

Of course, this daring and unprecedented act was of a purely exceptional character, being enacted because of purely exceptional circumstances; and it could be defended only by purely exceptional pleas. It formed far too tempting an occasion for an Opposition attack on the ministry, not to be embraced with avidity.

On the motion of Mr. Ponsonby, there was a great field-night in the House of Commons on the subject. The name of this gentleman is now completely unknown, except to students who have made a special study of the parliamentary history of the century. Nevertheless, he was a man of considerable mark in his own time; so much so, that a few years after the date at which we have now arrived—namely, in 1815—he was the reputed and responsible leader of the Opposition. It fortunately happens that we have it in our power to present our readers with a humorous portraiture of Ponsonby, executed in 1815, and generally understood to have been limned by no other than Palmerston himself.

There is a collection of fugitive pieces still extant in public libraries and the collections of some private persons, entitled the *New Whig Guide*. It consists of satirical and humorous effusions which appeared in ministerial prints during the first twenty years of the century, and which were afterwards republished in a volume. *The New Whig Guide*, without lashing its opponents

with the merciless severity of some of the pieces of the *Anti-Jacobin*, but rather affecting easy and comparatively good-humoured banter, nevertheless participates somewhat in the character of, and seems to have been suggested by, the admirable product of the brains of Gifford, Ellis, Frere, and Canning. The following sketch of Ponsonby is understood to be the handiwork of Palmerston:—

“They call a short and squattish gentleman of the name of Ponsonby their leader; but my mind misgives me if there be not more than one half who are loth to follow him. The leader is verily, as he ought to be, a very cautious guide, and rarely propoundeth he anything which can be contradicted or objected to. There is so much sameness and discretion in his style, that I can enable thee to judge of any quantity of it by a small sample. Discoursing of a treaty of peace, quoth the leader, ‘I cannot pronounce an opinion upon this treaty, Mr. Speaker, until I have read it. No one has a right, Mr. Speaker, to call upon me for an opinion upon this treaty until I have read it. This treaty cannot be printed and in the hands of members before Tuesday next at noon; and then, and not till then, Mr. Speaker, will I for one form my opinion upon this treaty. I am not such a fool as I am generally supposed to be.’ Here he pauseth, and raising his spectacles with his hand, and poising them dexterously on his forehead, he looketh steadfastly at the Speaker for some moments.”

Even after making all reasonable allowance for the influence of partisanship and the exaggeration of caricature, such an antagonist as this could have been by no means formidable, even to a timid member uttering his maiden speech. But Ponsonby only opened the ball on the night of his motion about our proceedings at Copenhagen, the 3rd of February, 1808. Much greater men than Ponsonby—Canning, Windham, Whitbread, Lord Leveson Gower, and Castlereagh, likewise took part in the debate. Truly a somewhat trying ordeal for the delivery of the first speech of a young man who had not yet completed his twenty-fourth year!

The debate was raised on this formal issue. Ponsonby moved for the production of papers to show the grounds on which the Government had advised his Majesty to

employ his naval and military forces in the expedition against Copenhagen." Canning had already, in reply to Ponsonby, vindicated the conduct of the ministers in his own lucid and brilliant style. But there came another and more redoubtable assailant. Palmerston rose, and with great modesty and equal self-possession delivered a speech, of which the following sentences constituted the pith. We quote them at greater length than we should have done, but for the interest which all readers must feel in perusing Palmerston's first recorded speech.

"I object, sir, to the motion of the honourable gentleman, because in this peculiar case his Majesty's ministers are pledged to secrecy; but I also object generally to making public the working of diplomacy, because it is the tendency of disclosures in that department to shut up future sources of information. With respect to the present expedition, it is defensible on the ground that the enormous power of France enables her to coerce the weaker state to become an enemy of England. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) has urged that we have been guilty of a violation of the law of nations. Sir, no man could be more ready than I to respect the law of nations; but the question in this case is how to apply the admitted principle, that the law of nations is sacred. It is one thing to admit the rights of nations, another to succumb to the policy which may for the time govern them. A nation coerced by a superior power loses that independence which is the plea for its rights, and the guarantee of their maintenance by mankind.

"In the case now before the House the law of nature is stronger than even the law of nations. It is to the law of self-preservation that England appeals for the justification of her proceedings. It is admitted by the honourable gentleman and his supporters, that if Denmark had evidenced any hostility towards this country, then we should have been justified in measures of retaliation. How then is the case altered, when we find Denmark acting under the coercion of a power notoriously hostile to us? Knowing as we do that Denmark is under the influence of France, can there be the shadow of a doubt that the object of our enemy would have been accomplished? Denmark coerced into hostility stands in

the same position as Denmark voluntarily hostile, when the law of self-preservation comes into play. *We* must remember what has been the conduct of France towards other countries; and if we would preserve the blessings of a free constitution, we must not judge this Government by a barren and abstract rule of justice, but by those large and more free principles which regulate the conduct of nations in great emergencies.

"Does any one believe that Bonaparte will be restrained by any considerations of justice from acting towards Denmark as he has done towards other countries? Is it at the very moment when his legions are returning triumphant to France, that Denmark can hope for an exemption from the calamities of war if she refuses to comply with the hostile intentions of France? Or can it be doubted that this would be the season when he would more especially seek to carry out his gigantic designs against us? England, according to that law of self-preservation which is a fundamental principle of the law of nations, is justified in securing, and therefore enforcing, from Denmark a neutrality which France would by compulsion have converted into an active hostility."

This speech at once gave Palmerston that weight with the House in general which he had already acquired with the more discerning ministers. Ere long, he was rewarded with still further political preferment. The speech is especially noteworthy to the readers of to-day, as containing the deliberate expression of the absolute necessity of secrecy in diplomacy which has remained one of his cardinal tenets all through his life.

## CHAPTER IV.

PALMERSTON SECRETARY-AT-WAR—THE WAR IN THE PENINSULA.

A.D. 1808—1813.

**I**N 1808, not content with the domination over, or possession of, Spain, Italy, the Swiss Cantons, the minor German States, and the Low Countries, nor with the successive abject humiliations which he had inflicted on Russia, Prussia, and Austria, at Eylau, Jena, and Austerlitz, Bonaparte determined upon the subjugation of Portugal, the most ancient ally of England. Through Portugal, he determined to strike at England, that he might avenge his disappointment about the Danish fleet. He sent Junot to the northern frontier of Portugal, to demand that she should shut her ports against the British. The Regent of Portugal was reluctantly forced into compliance, giving, however, timely information of his position to the English Ministry, and justifying his course by the unanswerable plea of absolute necessity. He also privately conveyed the tidings to the English traders resident in Portugal, that they might be forewarned of a catastrophe especially intended to affect them. Bonaparte was enraged when he discovered this, and insolently insisted that the British merchants should be imprisoned, and their property confiscated. The Regent was perplexed—so much so that he resolved to flee his dominions. He withdrew his troops to the coast, and, under English protection, sailed for his South American possession of Brazil. His people showed more bravery: they took up arms and expelled the French garrison from Oporto. French armies were at once despatched in enormous force to reduce Portugal, and also to support Joseph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne, on which his imperial brother *about this time* placed him, having, by the basest

treachery, at first induced the Bourbon King Charles to abdicate in favour of his son, whom Napoleon at once cajoled to enter France, where he kept him captive.

The English nation, with the exception of the expedition of Sir John Stuart to Southern Italy, where he won the battle of Maida, had not for some time taken a personal part in the land operations against Bonaparte on the European continent. The aggressions in Spain and Portugal at once decided the Ministry to depart from this policy of abstention. They resolved to send a strong force to the Peninsula, to drive the French out of Portugal, and to render assistance to the Spanish common people, who had awakened from their lethargy, and were now, all over their country, from the Pyrenees to Cadiz, carrying on a most gallant guerilla warfare—but a warfare, however galling to the French, quite ineffectual without the support of regular troops. England joyfully responded to the call of her leaders, and evinced a fixed determination to adhere to the cause of the Spaniards. The spirited lines of Southey exactly represent the fervour of the moment :—

First, from his trance, the heroic Spaniard woke :  
His chains he broke,  
And casting off his neck the treacherous yoke,  
He called on England, on his generous foe ;  
For well he knew that wheresoe'er  
Wise policy prevailed, or bold despair,  
Thither would Britain's succours flow,  
Her arm be present there.

To a very large extent the life of Lord Palmerston for the next six years is identical with the history of the Peninsular war. He was its controlling inspirer and guide. Wellington was the right arm of the nation ; to a large extent, Palmerston was its head.

If it be allowed that much of the credit of the Seven Years' war must be accorded to Chatham, who never wore uniform or begirt himself with a military sword from the day when, almost a boy, Walpole basely deprived him of his cornetcy in the Blues, some similar credit must be given to the man who was Secretary-at-War during the whole time when Wellington was Generalissimo in Spain ; *who ruled at the War Office from the day when Sir*

Arthur Wellesley defeated Loissar at Roleia to the day on which the Bordelaise opened their gates to the Marquis of Wellington, and elevated once more the old white flag of the Bourbons. The services of administration, trust, and official encouragement, which Chatham rendered to Amherst, Clive, and Wolfe, were paralleled by the similar services which Palmerston rendered to Wellesley, Graham, and Beresford.

In 1809 the Duke of Portland resigned the Premiership. Shortly after, there occurred an unfortunate difference between Castlereagh and Canning, the one making against the other such an accusation of dishonourable conduct that a hostile meeting was inevitable. Fortunately it came off without any serious disaster to either combatant. But both resigned their offices. The Ministry was reconstructed—Perceval being Prime Minister; the Marquis Wellesley, Sir Arthur's distinguished elder brother, Foreign Secretary; and, amongst other appointments, Palmerston was appointed Secretary-at-War. Few compliments could have been higher than this—the selection of a man only twenty-five years old, at such a national crisis, for so difficult a post, when there was such a choice of men eligible for the office, who possessed historical reputation and long experience.

Palmerston remained in the same position for about twenty years, undisturbed in its occupancy by successive changes and reconstruction of ministries.

He was Secretary-at-War under Perceval; throughout the long reign of Liverpool; under the splendid and short-lived administration of Canning, that sublime genius, who was hounded to death by the treacherous spite of his own party, and the mean, currish antagonism of certain of his Whig opponents; under the ludicrously short-lived administration of "Prosperity Robinson," Lord Goderich; and under the leadership of Wellington, whose Peninsular exploits, in so far as they are intermingled with the story of Palmerston's life, shall be touched upon in the immediately succeeding pages.

Wellesley directed his first efforts to the assistance of the Portuguese. He landed at Oporto with ten thousand men, and proceeded to the attack of General Junot. He completely defeated the French at Roleia, and again inflicted a *still more signal* reverse at Vimiera. But by



some extraordinary, and to this day inexplicable blunder, General Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived just at the conclusion of the fight; and taking, as senior officer, the command out of Wellesley's hands, concluded with the French terms of surrender much more favourable than in our position of triumph we had a fair right to exact.

1809 chronicled the mistaken enterprise and the sad fate of Sir John Moore. But the responsibility of the march towards Madrid and the retreat to Corunna rests neither with the brave commander of the Light Brigade nor with the English Ministry. It was our ambassador at Madrid, Mr. Frere, who alone was to blame.

At all events, Palmerston's hands were clean, for he became Secretary-at-War only in this year, and too late in the year to have any share in the direction of the expedition. It was *after* Palmerston's entry on his new office that Wellesley was sent back to the Peninsula, in supreme command of the English and Spanish forces. No discredit attaches to Palmerston for the mournful day of Corunna. But he *does* have a right to participate in the glories of Talavera, which gave Wellesley his first step in the Peerage, and was the first great victory gained under Palmerston's administration of the War department.

But it is time we carried our attention back to England, to inquire how Palmerston comported himself in the discharge, on the floor of the House of Commons, of his new duties.

In February, 1810, he moved, for the first time, the Army Estimates, in a speech which was highly eulogized by General Gascoigne, Mr. Huskisson, and other eminent members. We may here introduce the general remark that, for the next twelve or thirteen years—in fact, until the elevation of Palmerston's master, George Canning, to a position worthy of his genius and merits—we find the Secretary-at-War speaking only on subjects connected with the duties of his own department—moving the Estimates, the Mutiny Bill, and answering questions about, and replying to attacks against, the administration of the army and the conduct of the war. There is but one exception, the Catholic question, on which he warmly, but judiciously, and with a magnanimous independence of *the ties of party*, seconded the splendid efforts of the pure

and patriotic Grattan. But of that more anon in its own fit place.

The following sentences are extracted from the first speech of Palmerston, delivered in his official capacity of Secretary-at-War. After going through the routine pecuniary details of his duty—the citation of which would be dry and tedious to readers of to-day—he concluded his speech with some general remarks on the military aspect of England:—

“Our military force is at this moment as efficient in discipline as it is in numbers; and this not only in the regular army, but in the militia, volunteers, and other descriptions of force. We have six hundred thousand men in arms, besides a navy of two hundred thousand. The masculine energies of the nation were never more conspicuous, and the country never at any period of its history stood in so proud and glorious a position as at present. After a conflict for fifteen years, against an enemy whose power has been progressively increasing, we are still able to maintain the war with augmenting force and a population, by the pressure of external circumstances, consolidated into an impregnable military mass. Our physical strength has risen when it has been called for; and if we do not present the opposition of numerous fortresses to the invaders as the Continent does, we present the more inseparable barrier of a high-spirited, patriotic, and enthusiastic people.”

In the following May we find Palmerston making, in his official capacity, a short speech against a proposal to relieve officers in the army from the payment of the property tax, which had been proposed by Parliament for the purposes of the war. And we find no further trace of him in the parliamentary debates during this year.

Lord Palmerston, who had previously exchanged his nomination seat of Bletchingley for that of Newport, in the Isle of Wight, in 1811 succeeded in attaining the height of his first ambition. He was returned for the University of Cambridge.

1811 was the year of Badajoz, that magnificent assault, at the close of which, in the words of Napier, the gallant historian of the Peninsular War,—

“The rain flowed in streams discoloured with blood, and fifteen hundred unwounded men, the remnant of six

thousand unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill."

This was the result of the gallantry of Busaco and the magnificent strategy of Torres Vedras in the year preceding.

1811 witnessed, also, Graham's victory of Barossa, and Beresford's sanguinary defeat of Soult at Albuera.

At home, Palmerston again in due course moved the estimates. And, later in the session, in a debate on pay and allowances to the army, he uttered the following opinions on the nature of military distinctions:—

"There is a material difference to be observed between the pay of the soldier and the pay of the officer: that of the soldier is intended to supply him with the necessaries of life; but that of the officer is more in the nature of an honourable reward for his services, the value of which he will appreciate, not so much by the sum it contributes as by the principle on which it is granted."

A speech on the English and Irish Militia Exchange Bill, which provided that English militia regiments should be sent to duty in Ireland, and *vice versâ*, completes his parliamentary appearances for this year. He very properly argued that the Union was incomplete, and its spirit and intent defectively carried out, until this measure was enacted.

The year 1812 was glorified by Ciudad Rodrigo, Salamanca, and the occupation of Madrid. The successes of the earlier part of the year were, however, considerably counterbalanced by Wellington's delay in the siege of Burgos. He had to evacuate Madrid, and prudentially withdrew towards the Portuguese position. 1812 is especially memorable as the year of Borodino and the burning of Moscow, and that awful retreat of the French and flight of Napoleon, which was the fatal seal of his fortunes. From this time they steadily declined.

At home, the leading incident was a tragedy enacted in the lobby of the House of Commons—a tragedy thus bewailed by Dibdin:—

"The solemn senate no asylum yields,  
Nor Perceval from sanguine fury shields;  
There, unprotected by the sacred walls,  
Assassination's virtuous victim falls."

As Perceval was entering the lobby of the house, he was suddenly shot by a pistol in the breast. Exclaiming "Oh, I am murdered!" he advanced two or three paces and fell on his face. The assassin was one Bellingham, a Liverpool and Russian merchant.

It appeared, on investigation, that Bellingham had been in vain soliciting some redress for injuries he had sustained in Russia. His brain became turned, or half-turned, and he came to the conclusion that it was Perceval who was mainly responsible for his failure to obtain redress. He was tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty, and executed on the Monday morning succeeding his conviction.

General ministerial changes ensued. Castlereagh had already, early in the year, returned to the Foreign Office in the room of Lord Hertford. Vansittart became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Liverpool was installed as Premier, which post he continued to occupy until his death, in 1827. Palmerston's position was unaffected: he continued at the War Office.

In moving the estimates for this year, Palmerston employed this tone of gratulation:—

"While a most cheering view was presented by the state of our resources at home, and while we were still waging successful war against the enemy in various parts of the world, it was in no small degree gratifying to see our enemy himself furnishing us with the means of successful resistance to his unprincipled aggressions. It was seen that wherever he found his way, and dragged the reluctant inhabitants to his standard, to be at once the victims and the instruments of his diabolical and unjust oppression, no sooner were they converted into soldiers in his service, than at the first opportunity they quitted his detested ranks and came over to the English."

During this year Palmerston had frequent occasion to speak on military subjects—on the employment of mercenaries, schools for soldiers, officers' pay, &c.

On the subject of flogging in the army, which he justified, he was opposed by Brougham, who had recently found a seat in the house, and who expressed his opinion of the public indebtedness to Cobbett for the services he had rendered by his publications on this subject.

*If Brougham could have foreseen the rod that Cobbett*

had in pickle for him, and had any prospective idea of the tremendous castigations which were to be inflicted upon him by the burly and free-spoken Radical—a man who did more to educate the English masses into political activity than any other who ever lived—he perhaps would have stinted the emphasis of his eulogy.

On the subject of the alleged danger to be apprehended from the employment of foreigners in our army, Palmerston defended the Government policy with equal plausibility and force :—

“A foreign sovereign (William III.) was then on the throne, and the people were not then, as they now are, generally familiarized to the use of arms; the whole standing army being then not above twenty thousand men. There then existed no war like the present, in which we see Bonaparte sending Spaniards into the north, Germans into Spain, and Poles to preserve the tranquillity of Italy. Is there, then, any serious ground for apprehension for the liberties of the country, when we know that the number of foreigners in our service is limited by law to the number of sixteen thousand, and that of those the far larger proportion go abroad?”

In defence of flogging, he thus argued in the same year :—

“I do not think it fair to argue from analogy against this mode of punishment. In foreign armies, where corporal punishment is not systematic, there exists what is still more degrading to men—a system of wanton and capricious ill-usage. Trials by court-martial are governed by the strict spirit of justice, and therefore cannot be said to overthrow the energies of the men. With respect to corporal punishment, it is not coeval with the present men, as has been stated, but has existed in all times when the military service has been called into action. With respect to promotions, an honourable baronet and a gallant general have stated some instances of privates being elevated to commissions. I shall state another fact. After the battle of Busaco, the Commander-in-Chief sent to Lord Wellington ten ensigns’ commissions, as rewards for so many non-commissioned officers who had greatly distinguished themselves.”

Having another occasion, in the same year, to defend

the employment of foreign mercenaries, in reply to Lord Folkestone, he put even more strongly those considerations which we have already cited :—

“If any man would look at the map of Europe, and see what a portion of its population the enemy had forced into hostility against this country ; if he were also to consider the limited population of these two islands, and the extensive colonies we had to defend, and the navy we had to support, it appeared to him hardly possible that such a man could now adhere to the idea of not employing foreigners in our service. Looking at the present state of the world, and viewing the countless hosts that were arrayed against Great Britain, single-handed, it seemed to him the height of absurdity to make such an objection. Because of our having swept the seas of our enemy, and because our small but gallant armies had hitherto stood undaunted and unbroken before the overwhelming forces of France and all her dependent states, was it to be urged that we were, unaided and unsupported, capable of maintaining for ever so unequal a contest ? ”

In 1813 the fortunes of Napoleon continued sensibly and rapidly to decline. At Vittoria was fought a battle of singular obstinacy, in which the British lost four thousand, and the French double the number of men. The French were worsted, and retreated precipitately to the Pyrenees. They bravely disputed the mountain passes against Wellington, but ineffectually, and the forts of St. Sebastian and Pampeluna fell into our hands. This encouraged the Northern powers.

Austria united with Prussia and Russia in denunciation of the armistice to which they had been compelled to agree, and declared war against France.

To quote again “The Vision of Don Roderick :”—

“The fame of that victorious fight, [Vittoria]  
Revived the spirit of the farthest North ;  
And England in auspicious hour put forth  
Her whole unshackled might.”

The battle of Leipsic secured the independence of Germany. The Bavarian troops joined the allies in the course of the fight ; the troops of Saxony, Baden, and Würtemberg, previously coerced into alliance with

Napoleon, laid down their arms. Holland threw off her yoke, and recalled her Stadtholder, who had been an exile since the campaign of Dumouriez in 1792.

Lord Palmerston's speeches connected with the business of his department in this year resemble so closely those to which we have already referred, that citation from them would be superfluous. In this year he made a great and magnanimous speech on the question of the Catholic claims. This question had agitated successive Cabinets and Parliaments for many years. The one great obstacle to its settlement had been the stubborn and bigoted resistance of George III. And even now that he was mad, and his son Regent with full regal powers, the Prince of Wales refused to fulfil the promises made to his old friends the Whigs, and was as stubborn as his father.

The Whigs had always been in favour of emancipation ; and, to some extent, it had all along been an open question in successive Tory Cabinets. Pitt—a thorough Liberal at heart—had ever been in favour of the concession ; and Canning and others reserved to themselves the right of differing on this point from such opponents of the measure among their colleagues as Spencer Perceval and Lord Chancellor Eldon.

We have already seen that this question destroyed the Grenville Ministry, just after the death of Fox, and immediately before Palmerston entered Parliament. In the previous year (1812), it had again agitated both Houses ; but the proposal for emancipation was negatived by a great majority. In 1813, Grattan re-moved the question, proposing a motion "for taking into consideration the laws affecting Catholics." Grattan, himself an Irish Protestant, had made this question peculiarly his own, and had dedicated his whole life to the achievement of the patriotic task. He was a member of the Irish bar, and had sat in the Irish House of Commons. He exerted his nervous eloquence in the cause of his country's independence. In a very short time he gained to himself the admiration and love of the whole Irish people. He raised their naturally fervid nature to a pitch of the highest enthusiasm. Ireland complained of commercial restrictions—he threw open her commerce, and produced that extraordinary cause of national prosperity which distinguished the years after 1780. He was the mover of

the memorable resolution in the Irish Parliament, when the English Legislature was endeavouring to usurp the right of governing that kingdom before the Union,—“That the King’s most excellent Majesty, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland, are the only power competent to make laws to bind Ireland.” £50,000 were voted him, “as a testimony of the national gratitude for such great national services.” He opposed the Union, but after it was carried, solicited the suffrages of an English constituency for a seat in the Imperial Parliament. From the day when he took his seat in St. Stephen’s, until the day of his death, he ceased not to strive for the dear object of his life’s elevation, displaying a purity of character equal to that of Aristides, and with an eloquence at once vigorous and splendid, which combined all the excellences of the English and the Irish schools of oratory.

Sir James Mackintosh well said of Grattan, “He is one of the few private men whose private virtues are followed by public fame; he is one of the few men whose private virtues are to be cited as examples for those who would follow in his public steps. He was as eminent in his observance of all the duties of private life as he was heroic in the discharge of his public ones.” Such was the man at whose feet Palmerston learned a lesson of religious liberty. Palmerston showed great independence of character in daring, while a member of the ministry of which obstinate Liverpool and superstitious Eldon were the leaders, to differ with his chiefs on a question so eminently calculated to promote their acerbity and affect his interests. He showed equal independence of mind in the nature of his advocacy of Grattan’s and the Catholics’ cause. He advocated emancipation on grounds totally different from those urged by Grattan. The one was a popular advocate, the other was eminently a statesman in every sense of the word.

No speech could be cited more appropriately than that from which we are about to quote at some length, as showing the utter absence of any “isms” or “broad principles” in Lord Palmerston’s system of policy. He took up his own statesmanlike and practical mode of looking at events and questions when he entered public life; and *amid all the strife of party, all the great national crises*



through which he passed, and in spite of all those temptations, so extremely seductive in a country governed as ours is, to flaunt sounding truisms and plausible platitudes, he never departed from his primal dignity, or deviated from his first course.

"Although I wish the Catholic claims to be considered, *I never will admit their claims to stand upon the ground of right.* To maintain that the legislature of a country has not a right to impose such political disabilities upon any class of the community as it may deem necessary for the welfare and safety of the whole, would be to strike at once at the fundamental principles on which civilized government is founded. If I thought the Catholics were asking for their rights, I, for one, would not go into the Committee. What! would it be becoming for the British Parliament to say to the Catholics—'We allow that what you ask of us are only just and natural rights, but we will not freely and liberally grant them. We will go into a Committee to barter with you for the concession of those admitted rights, to see under what conditions, with what modifications, and subject to what restrictions, these rights can be sanctioned by us'? Such conduct would at once be inconsistent and unjust. I wish the few honourable members who maintain this doctrine of right to weigh well all the consequences to which it is calculated to lead.

"Putting this question, however, entirely upon the ground of *expediency*, I cannot concur with those who think that they have proved the expediency of continuing the Catholic disabilities now, by showing that they were necessary in the times when they were originally imposed. These disabilities are not the rule of the Constitution, but an exception from that rule; their necessity in one century is no evidence of their expediency in another; and it is as much incumbent upon those who now contend for their continuance, to show that they are required for the present security of the State, as it was upon those who first framed them, to prove the necessity of their original enactment.

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"I do not think, then, that a case of danger has been sufficiently made out; but if I think there is no real danger in the removal of these disabilities, accompanied

by such other corresponding regulations as the House may ultimately adopt, I do think there is both inconvenience and danger in the continuance of the present anomalous state of things. We have gone too far to stop where we are; if it had been intended for ever to debar the Catholics from any share in the honours of this Constitution, they have been too largely admitted to its civil privileges. It is not in human nature to be satisfied when so near the attainment of its wishes.

"We cannot, under these circumstances, hope to derive those advantages from the Catholics, as members of the community, which otherwise we might expect. We have in the bosom of the empire a large mass, considerable by its numbers, by property, by rank, by talent and activity, but separate in its feelings, distinct in its interests, circumscribed and cut off from the rest of the community by an impassable line of demarcation. Is this a desirable state of things? can we be said to have at our command the full natural resources of the united empire? I do not mean to palliate or defend the conduct of the Catholics: it has been most reprehensible. To their own violence and intemperance they have to ascribe many of the difficulties which they still have to encounter. But is the course which has been so long pursued with regard to them wise and beneficial for the country? That is the real question for the House to consider. Is it wise, for instance, to say to any set of men that they may enter, it is true, the army or the navy; but whatever may be the bravery and talents they display, however brilliant the achievements they may perform, they must remain in the inferior ranks of the service? Can we hope from such men the full stretch of exertion to which by proper incentives they might be led? Is it wise again to admit men to the profession of the law and forbid them to aspire to its honours? Might not the knowledge and habit of business so acquired sometimes be perverted to mischievous purposes? Might not the activity or ambition which is cherished in one direction break out in another? If men feel that they cannot hope to rise to professional honours, may they not be tempted to gratify their love of destruction by becoming the leaders of a faction? I do not say that such things would, but undoubtedly they *might, be.*

“Is it wise to say to men of rank and property, who, from old lineage or present possessions, have a deep interest in the common weal, that they live indeed in a country where, by the blessings of a free constitution, it is possible for any man, themselves only excepted, by the honest exertion of talents and industry in the avocations of political life, to make himself honoured and respected by his countrymen, and to render good service to the State, that they alone can never be permitted to enter this career; that they may indeed usefully employ themselves in the humbler avocations of private life, but that public service they never can perform, public honour they never shall attain? What we have lost by the continuance of this system it is not for man to know; what we may have lost can be more easily imagined. If it had unfortunately happened that, by the circumstances of birth and education, a Nelson, a Wellington, a Burke, a Fox, or a Pitt, had belonged to this class of the community, of what honours and what glory might not the page of British history have been deprived? To what perils and calamities might not this country have been exposed? The question is not whether we would have so large a part of the population Catholic or not. There they are, and we must deal with them as we can. It is in vain to think that by any human pressure we can stop the spring which gushes from the earth. But it is for us to consider whether we will force it to spend its strength in secret and hidden courses, undermining our fences and corrupting our soil, or whether we shall at once turn the current into the open and spacious channel of honourable and constitutional ambition, converting it into the means of national prosperity and public wealth.”

## CHAPTER V.

## THE DOWNFALL OF NAPOLEON : WATERLOO.

A.D. 1814—1816.

WHILE Lord Palmerston had been gradually and firmly securing for himself a place, if not in the foremost, at least in the second rank of statesmen, he had been acquiring laurels in quite another field. England is governed for the most part by its aristocracy. They do not now constitute our only legislators, but they had a much larger share of parliamentary power in Palmerston's earlier than in his latter days ; and they had an almost monopoly of the administration ; almost the only men who shared it with them were men of the Wilson Croker stamp, who thoroughly identified themselves with aristocratic interests, and were even more violently anti-popular than their noble patrons. Under such a plan of government, it is at once obvious how absolutely necessary it was for any politician, who wished to secure his foothold on the ladder of place, to stand well with what is called "society" for want of a better term, as well as with the professional class of leading politicians. It was essential to be a favourite in the drawing-rooms of the leaders of fashion, as well as a power in the House and an authority in the bureau. Whether by his natural qualities or from set intention, Palmerston had perfectly succeeded in making himself a favourite in "society." And we of the present day have little idea how impregnable and select "society" was in 1814. This fact sufficiently appears from the circumstance that at the date of which we speak, out of the whole of the officers of the brigade of Guards, numbering some three hundred gentlemen, nearly all of them being men of family, fortune, and fashion, only six had the *entrée* to Almack's, which was

then in its glory. Palmerston had personal qualities which peculiarly fitted him to shine and communicate pleasure in the inner circles of fashion. He had a fine figure, and a face, if not absolutely handsome, at least considerably above the average of male beauty. His rosy and somewhat chubby face, and his profuse curly locks, in connection with his everlasting, half-humorous, half-wicked smile, procured him the *sobriquet* of "Cupid," which long stuck to him. We have heard a foolish and entirely unauthenticated *mot*, stated to have been circulated when he first made himself felt in Parliament—"Beau Brummel has turned Boanerges." This alliterative joke is but a poor one, and bears sufficient improbability upon the face of it to be at once rejected; for his parliamentary position was gained previously to, or contemporaneously and side by side with, his fashionable repute; whereas the point of the spurious joke lies in the assumption that his currency in the drawing-rooms had been attained ere his parliamentary authority was established. Nevertheless, like all exaggerations and some spurious coinages, the saying contains just a germ of truth. Palmerston came out when "dandyism" was at its height—a thing to which the dandyism of our own days, as transcribed and stereotyped for posterity by such caricaturists as John Leech, bears only the faintest likeness. Dandyism fifty years ago was an elaborate art—not the dawdling, *dolce far niente*, "Dundreary" affectation of to-day. Dandyism during the Regency was an art—an art, too, which absorbed the services of many attendant and ancillary arts—tailorism, boot-manufacturing, perfumery, snuff-taking, and the art of wielding a cane. It had a certain curious spice of democracy in it. It was by no means men of the first families, or even the best fortunes, who were leaders among the dandies. The Prince himself, with his magnificent person and bewitching manners—and with, what was even more important then, his hundreds of snuff-boxes, wigs, and faultless inexpressibles—although it was his highest ambition to be the premier dandy, was completely eclipsed by some of the lowliest of his subjects in his realm of fashion. Brummel, who by the common consent of many of the women and all the men, bore the undisputed sway, was of the meanest origin and utterly destitute of any known

source of income. D'Orsay, although of reputed good blood, was but an obscure exile, and almost as penniless as Brummel. Alvanley was but a *parvenu* member of the peerage. It was necessary towards social success that a man should be something of a dandy. And Palmerston, who all through life has proved himself very willing to obey the apostolic injunction to be "all things to all men," conformed to the prevailing mode. His fine person, his perfect knowledge of the chief modern languages of civilized states, his gay, half-polite, half-tantalizing, but wholly amusing *insouciance* made him a great favourite with the fair sex. He confirmed his successes in the House by securing the admiration—and sometimes, if report said truly, the still tenderer feelings—of the female members of the families of his colleagues and opponents. He was one of the lions of Almack's. Captain Gronow writes, under date of the very year at which we have arrived in our narrative,—“In 1814 the dances at Almack's were Scotch reels and the old English country dance; and the orchestra, being from Edinburgh, was conducted by the then celebrated Neil Gow. It was not until 1815 that Lady Jersey introduced from Paris the favourite quadrille which has so long remained popular. The “Mazy Waltz” was also brought to us about this time; but there were comparatively few who first ventured to whirl round the *salons* of Almack's; in course of time, however, Lord Palmerston might have been seen describing an infinite number of circles with Madame de Lieven.” Madame, or the Countess, de Lieven was a well-known Russian *intrigante*—*Anglicè*, political spy. She lived many a year after she first waltzed with Lord Palmerston at Almack's. Her faculties remained vigorous to the last. So vigorous indeed were they, and so formidable was their exercise, that, just after the commencement of the Crimean war, Louis Napoleon was obliged to be discourteous enough to request her withdrawal from Paris—so much did he apprehend the vigilance of her eyes and ears and the communication by her of valuable information to her Emperor. Who knows but that Palmerston may have practised waltzing for diplomatic reasons; and that the handsome couple of waltzers may have been whispering politics while the astonished assembled *fashion* was admiring their gyrations?

It is curious that the same page of Captain Gronow's reminiscences that contains the sentences we have just extracted has the following reference to the lady who a quarter of a century afterwards was to become Lord Palmerston's wife. After enumerating the then lady patronesses, and enlarging on their several charms, he adds,—“The most popular amongst these *grandes dames* was unquestionably Lady Cowper, now Lady Palmerston.”

But 1814 contained more serious business than waltzing; and not a little of the hard work that the world at that time had to transact fell upon Lord Palmerston's shoulders. Having driven the French out of Spain, Wellington crossed the Pyrenees after them. His victorious troops entered France from the south, about the same time as the conquerors of Leipsic, under Blücher and Schwarzenberg, entered it from the east. Both armies continued their triumphal march until they met in Paris. Bonaparte having abdicated, the foolish Bourbon was restored. Great rejoicings followed the peace in England. The Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and their victorious marshals came to London, and were received by all ranks with the utmost enthusiasm. The supplementary estimates, technically termed “Army Extraordinaries,” were moved by Palmerston in June. Of course they exhibited a large reduction. For the land service little more than a million and a half was demanded. The country was in an ecstasy of delight, and the Ministry unboundedly popular.

The year 1815 dawned most auspiciously in the estimation of all the nation. The Whigs began to look to their armoury, with a view to reviving the old contests on questions of domestic policy, which had been quite extinguished during the last few years of the war. Palmerston (reputedly) thus satirized the perplexities of the Opposition, at the commencement of the session, on the “Choice of a Leader.”

“The recess nearly spent, and approaching the hour,  
That renews the vain struggle for places and power,  
The Whigs, duly summoned, are met to prepare  
Their annual bill of political fare.  
Their brows, like the season, are cloudy and dark;  
Of hope scarce a ray, and of joy not a spark  
Illumine any visage—save Whitbread's alone,  
Who grins as he fancies the game all his own,

Expects the whole sway of the faction to bear,  
 And sees his own strength in his party's despair.  
 And now to the meeting each member began  
 To open his separate project and plan ;  
 And each in each varied event of the times  
 Beholds a new mark of the Ministry's crimes—  
 Bad faith with Murat—and the low price of corn,  
 The American Lakes—and the Duchy of Thorn,  
 The Legion of Honour—the Trading in Blacks,  
 Baron Impert's arrest—and the Property Tax,  
 Colonel Quentin's court-martial—and Spain's discontent,  
 The Catholic claims—and the Treaty of Ghent."

The above humorously and incongruously asserted list of topics—many of them now forgotten, and some of them intelligible enough to the modern reader—would doubtless have constituted the staple of the subjects of Parliamentary discussion in 1815, but for the startling and extraordinary event which will for ever remain associated in human history with that momentous year. Ere we come to that event, we shall advert only to one discussion, which took place in the early part of the year. Lord Cochrane, better known to fame by his subsequent title of Earl of Dundonald, was the most consummate and daring fighting man on the sea that the world and the maritime nations ever produced. We know that this bold statement of ours is liable to animadversion, and that very many critics of strategy will be disposed to pooh-pooh it. But it must be remembered that from causes which arose in no degree from circumstances connected with his professional capacities, Dundonald never had the opportunity of commanding an English fleet until in his old age Queen Victoria did herself, her country, and her aged subject equal honour by appointing him to the command of the West Indian squadron. This, of course, was in peaceful times; and we base our high opinion of his military genius in the promise he evinced when in the command of one vessel, or at most two or three, in the Mediterranean and off the coast of France. We maintain that exploits of his performed when he commanded a vessel under Admirals Lords Keith and St. Vincent, or when the obtuse and bungling Lord Gambier spoilt his splendid and daring adventure in the Basque Roads by his timidity and irresolution, eclipse even the



most brilliant deeds of Keppel, Hawke, Collingwood, or even Nelson.

Dundonald had in considerable degree himself to blame for his failure to receive that promotion in his profession that would have enabled him to display his genius in a worthy arena. He endeavoured to perform simultaneously two utterly inconsistent and irreconcilable parts—that of a captain holding his Majesty's commission, and subject to the orders, and dependent upon the goodwill, of the Admiralty, and that of a violently Radical member for the noisiest and most turbulent of metropolitan constituencies. It was impossible and against all human nature that the Admiralty could be expected to promote a man,—that it would fail to put the biggest and the blackest of black marks against the name of a man who was the sharpest and most galling critic in Parliament of the decrepitudes, the misdoings, and the dishonesties of its administration. Dundonald became the darling of Westminster—and the Admiralty positively refused to give him a ship. He was for some years on shore, when, towards the close of the war between the United States and ourselves, which commenced in 1812 and terminated in 1814, his uncle, Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, was appointed to the command of the English fleet in American waters. As has always been the right and privilege of English admirals, Sir Alexander exercised his right of appointing his own flag-captain, and he chose his nephew. Lord Cochrane was just starting to join his vessel, when he was arrested on a criminal charge—that of circulating a false report about the abdication of Napoleon, with the purpose of operating for his personal benefit upon the Stock Exchange. He was put upon his trial, together with others who were also accused. He was perfectly innocent of the charge, but with a mistaken though chivalrous sense of honour, although strongly advised to an opposite course by his counsel, Mr. Brougham, he refused to dissociate his own defence from that of an uncle (not the admiral), who was also accused. The uncle and the other accused persons were undoubtedly guilty. Ellenborough, the judge who tried the case, imported more than his usual cruel partisanship and partiality into the investigation; and the result was that all were found *guilty by the jury*. Lord Cochrane was sentenced to pay

a fine of a thousand pounds, and to suffer imprisonment for a year. He was expelled the House of Commons and cashiered by order of his Majesty.

On the 17th of March, 1815, a motion, which had reference to Dundonald's case, was brought forward in the House of Commons, to the effect that "there should be no dismissal from military or naval offices by the Crown, otherwise than by court-martial." Lord Palmerston took part in the debate, and opposed the motion, on these, among other grounds:—"Was the commission granted by his Majesty to be considered such a freehold property as to warrant its being deemed an injury to an individual to take it away from him, when he had become unworthy of bearing it? There were many causes which might justify his Majesty in withdrawing his confidence from an officer which could not be brought before a court-martial. Disaffection, incapacity, or disgraceful conduct, were amongst these. The clause itself was not a new one. It had already been discussed and rejected in the House of Commons without a division, and in that of the Peers by a large majority. The circumstances in which it had been thus lost, were, however, much more in favour of its adoption than the present. It was in 1734, when Sir Robert Walpole had recommended the King to dismiss Lord Cobham and the Duke of Bolton from the command of their regiments, which might be supposed to have been done in consequence of political differences. This prerogative in the hands of the Crown was necessary to the discipline of the army, and even the liberty of the subject."

To the astonishment of all Europe, and the dismay of the most part of it, Napoleon escaped from Elba and landed in France. The army and his old marshals rallied round him. King Louis fled, and Napoleon made a triumphal progress from Cannes, the port of his debarkation, to Paris. The allied sovereigns at once took up arms. In the English House of Commons, Whitbread, Ponsonby, and Lord Althorpe made a faint attempt to prevent our participation in the struggle. But Castle-reagh, supported by such men as Wilberforce, carried the House with him. Our sweet delusion of peace was soon disturbed; but the nation accepted the renewal of the war as imperative and inevitable. The army was aug-

mented, on Palmerston's motion, by seven thousand above the aggregate number of soldiers who had been in arms ere Bonaparte's abdication, at a cost of three millions above the army estimates of the previous year. The plains of Belgium were to be the arena of the final conflict, in which Napoleon hazarded all once more. A large Prussian army under Blücher hastened to the scene, and Wellington commanded a still larger force of British, Belgians, and Germans. The reverses of Somliuef, Quatre-Bras, and Ligny were succeeded by the glorious victory won at St.-Jean, a league in front of the village of Waterloo. The farmhouse of La-Haye-Sainte was carried by the French, but Hougomont was bravely held against them. And at last, Anglesea, with his dragoons, and the foot-guards inspired by the cheering words of the great Duke himself, swept the French from the field in confusion and dismay, and—the Prussians coming up—made a final end of Bonaparte. Palmerston's active trade as Secretary-at-War was gone. And it was many, many years ere he had aught but the ordinary work of routine administration to perform.

There was, however, a short fight over the Army Estimates in 1816; the Opposition complaining that the army was kept up in numbers much above the necessities of a peace establishment, and demanding that it should be reduced to its anti-war dimensions. On Palmerston devolved the chief responsibility of responding to the assault, and of defending the course pursued by Government. As the debate was not only an extremely interesting one, but as it also brought out the speakers very characteristically, displaying forcibly the several peculiarities, excellencies, and foibles of each, we present a condensed summary of it.

After Palmerston had formally moved the Army Estimates, Lord John Russell, who was just beginning to feel his way into the position of a Whig leader of the second or third grade, got up and objected to the enormous amount of the estimates. He dwelt with great show of feeling upon the groans and burdens of the people, and insisted with strong constitutional horror upon the imminent danger of increasing the influence of the Crown by maintaining a standing army of a hundred and fifty *thousand men in time of peace*. He threw ridicule on the

plea that so large an army was needful for our security. The war had been continued so long, ministers had always urged, for the very purpose of preventing the necessity of an armed peace. And what else had we now got, as the result of twenty years of continuous war, but an armed peace? If the opposite side argued that we were still in peril, that only proved that the whole war and the policy of ministers had gone for nothing, and been absolutely fruitless. In that case, we were no better off than we had been, fourteen years before, at the Peace of Amiens.

Mr. Frankland Lewis, a very respectable politician, and the father of the much-esteemed and much-regretted Sir George Cornewall Lewis, followed on the same side. He especially alluded to the large and, as he alleged, the unnecessary force of twenty-five thousand men proposed for Ireland.

Mr. Yorke gave a warm support to the Ministry. He justified their every figure and their every man, alleged that the country was thoroughly capable of bearing the proposed burden without any inconvenience, and concluded with a True Blue Old Tory eulogium on the prosperity and greatness of the country.

This brought up Brougham, who rose to rectify Yorke. He ridiculed the argument that the army must be increased *pro rata* with the increase of population. Did the increase of population mean an increase of national weakness, and therefore involve and necessitate an increase of the force for the protection of the nation? Or was a large army required to be used *against* the people, whose numbers had been augmented? In 1784, under the rule of Mr. Fox and his coadjutors, when our wars with the American colonists and with three great European powers were ended, the army was reduced to fifty thousand. Why not follow so excellent an example, and return to those halcyon days? In an excited and indignant peroration, he threatened the Government with the voice of the country, advised them not to be lulled into false security by their easily managed Parliamentary majorities, and counselled them not to try the patience and the temper of the people too long.

Lord Palmerston began by observing that the honourable and learned member had made an accusation against him which he certainly could not retort upon that

honourable gentleman himself; namely, that he very seldom troubled the House with his observations. He would abstain from all declamation, and from any dissertation on the Constitution, and confine himself to the business at present on hand—the Army Estimates of the current year. This was not because he was at all unwilling to take up the constitutional question with his opponents, but because this was not the fit time for so general a disquisition.

Exclusive of the troops in India, and the army in occupation of France, the total number of men proposed in the votes was 99,000. These might be divided under four heads: those stationed in Great Britain; those in Ireland; those in our old colonies, that is the colonies we had possessed previously to the war; and those in our new colonies, or those which we acquired in the progress of the war. It was proposed to have 25,000 in Britain, the same number in Ireland, 23,800 in our old colonies, and 22,200 in the new. Add to these 3,000 as a reserve fund for reliefs to the colonial garrisons, and the aggregate was made up. He would not say much about the numbers proposed for Ireland. His right honourable friend the Secretary for Ireland would be quite able to meet that point. But he merely remarked, in passing, upon the absolute necessity, having regard to the reciprocal interests of the two countries, now for nine years fully united, of providing adequate protection for persons and property there.

With respect to the old colonies, the estimates provided only 7,000 men more than had garrisoned them previously to the outbreak of the war. There was a larger force at Gibraltar, but that was rendered necessary by the great extension of the works and fortifications. In the whole of our North American possessions, the Bahamas included, there were only 4,000 more men than there had been in 1791. There were many causes for this increase. The increasing population required larger means of defence—certainly not to be used *against* the inhabitants. Upper Canada had been almost entirely peopled and settled since the war commenced. He did not insinuate any suspicions of broils with the United States. He hoped that both countries had equally made the discovery that peace was the preferable policy. *Still, as a matter of political prudence, we must always*

provide for possible contingencies. *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, &c. He was firmly convinced that amongst nations weakness would never be a foundation for security. The navigation between the two countries was suspended during the winter, and, in the case of a rupture, many months might elapse ere reinforcements could be sent. In Jamaica, the force had been increased from two to four thousand. The same arguments justified this augmentation as those used in the case of America. At Antigua there had been established a considerable naval arsenal, which involved the presence of an additional military force.

As to the force required for the occupation of the new colonies, or those acquired during the war, the criterion adopted by his Majesty's Government was the number of troops of the enemy found in them when they capitulated. Here he was greeted with loud ironical cheers, their gist being that we did not require so many men to garrison these colonies in peaceful times, as the French and the Dutch did when they tried to hold them against our assaults. Palmerston at once apprehended the significance of the Opposition cheers, and retorted that his Majesty's Government, although adopting this criterion, by no means meant to follow it rigidly, and place as many men there as the enemy had had.

The captured colonies were Ceylon, Mauritius, the Cape, the African settlements, Trinidad, Tobago, St. Lucie, Demerara, Berbice, Essequibo, Malta, and the Ionian Islands. In all, the enemy's garrisons there had capitulated to the number of 30,000. This was after all their losses by deaths in action and from sickness. The Government only proposed 22,000 men for these colonies, not two-thirds of the garrisons the enemy had kept up. He expatiated on the great military value of our acquisition, the island of Malta. The Ionian Isles and the Mauritius were experiments until we discovered how far the natives were reconciled to our rule, and, accordingly, what numbers of troops we should require to keep there.

The 25,000 men for the home station exceeded by 7,000 the numbers of 1791. But the large increase in our colonial possessions rendered it necessary to keep up a considerably increased reserve at home. It was quite possible, though he hoped quite improbable, that the army of occupation in France might be again called into

action. If there were not such a possibility, there would be no need of keeping them in France at all.

The noble lord thus concluded his extremely elaborate and exhaustive speech :—"The plain question for the House to consider was, whether they would reduce all the military establishments of the country below their just level ; and whether, if they did so, the saving would have any comparison to the injury that might be done. For, after all, even if the plans of retrenchment so loudly called for were adopted, the diminution of expenditure would not be half so great as the country and the House seemed to imagine. Would it, therefore, be a wise or expedient course, under these circumstances, to abdicate the high rank we now maintained in Europe, to take our station amongst secondary powers, and confine ourselves entirely to our own island ? He would again repeat that the question was not whether they should carry into effect such diminution of the military establishment of the country as would save the people from the income-tax, for he contended that no possible reduction in those establishments could accomplish that end ; but whether they should compel the Crown to abandon all our colonial possessions, the fertile sources of our commercial wealth, and whether we should descend from that high and elevated station which it had cost us so much labour, so much blood, and so much treasure to attain."

## CHAPTER VI.

REACTION AFTER THE WAR : THE LAST OF OLD TORYISM.

A.D. 1816—1822.

**T**HOSE years of English history which we shall traverse in this chapter may be most fitly designated *transitory*. They contained and chronicled the painful and agonized reaction of the country after the great tension and the altogether unnatural and fictitious prosperity of the preceding years of war. They were characterized by very great and very grievous general distress, and, as an unfortunate but necessary consequence, by great popular fermentation and antagonism to the Government. This produced a severity which the supporters of the Tory administration justified on the plea of inevitable necessity, but which is now with almost total unanimity condemned as having displayed needless stringency, and evinced the worst form of cruelty,—that which is dictated by terror. On more than one occasion, in the years between 1816 and 1822, England was on the verge of revolution. Nothing is more dangerous than to hazard retrospective and contingent surmise; but it may be alleged with a confidence closely approaching to certainty, that there would have been a popular uprising and a large amount of bloodshed in England but for the maintenance of a considerable proportion of that enormous standing army which the necessities of the war had called into existence.

The period may be called a *transitory* one in Palmerston's career as well as in the history of the country he served.

But for the frequent and exciting debates on the magnitude of our military force, the discharge by the *Secretary-at-War* of his official duties would have been of a



mere perfunctory and routine character, limited to moving the Army Estimates and the Mutiny Bill. It is with great satisfaction that a biographer of Palmerston can report that he who hopes to discover in the pages of Hansard's "Debates" any open support given by him to those repressive measures with which the execrated names of Sidmouth, Liverpool, and Castlereagh are so unenviably identified, will seek in vain.

The sole link by which, in the researches of the careful student of his life, Palmerston is brought into connection with the successive suspensions of old-established liberties which distinguish this gloomy epoch of our history, is the series of speeches delivered from year to year in defence of the magnitude of those military establishments which—as some would say, the dangerous spirit of the country, or as others would have it, the oppressive policy of the Administration—rendered necessary. He spoke no word in favour of any of the "Six Acts." He took no public share in the attempts to cramp the liberty of the press. His name was never identified with the attempts—by many alleged to be unconstitutional—to increase the severity of the laws against so-called sedition and libel. The yeomanry who in a moment of mad bloodthirstiness sabred their poor starving fellow-countrymen at Peterloo, found in the War Secretary no apologist. Nor was his voice ever heard in justification of the odious inhumanity which employed spies to lure and incite such pitiable wretches as Thistlewood and Brandreth to the crimes which resulted in their deaths as traitors. It is also to the lasting honour of the three greatest English statesmen who have, since Pitt, held the supreme reins of power in England—Canning, Peel, and Palmerston—that not one of the three, by word or deed, took part in the proceedings which purposed the degradation and produced the death of the unfortunate consort of George IV. We are not unmindful of the fact that our function is that of the truthful biographer, not the forensic eulogist of Lord Palmerston.

It may be urged that Lord Palmerston remained a member of the Ministry whose leading members were directly responsible for all these acts. While it may be said that Palmerston accepted the general responsibility, as much as he made no movement to resign his office;

on the other hand, it must be recollected that, although in the Ministry, he was not yet elevated, in the year of the Queen's trial, to the position of a member of the Cabinet, and accordingly had no share in devising its unpopular and unjustifiable measures. If he did not disapprove so strongly as to resign, at least he may be acquitted of any share in the concoction of the bolts hurled against public liberty and public virtue.

The years immediately succeeding the conclusion of peace produced no benefit save the negative blessings of repose and the cessation of death by war, except in such minor affairs as the operations of Exmouth against the Algerines, and Hastings against the Pindarees. Our manufacturing and commercial interests, prostrated after the war, were completely stagnant; and a succession of bad harvests completed the distress caused to the agricultural classes by the sudden fall from the long-continued enormous prices of cereals. Derby, Manchester, and London became the centres of the most violent political agitation. Conflicts took place between armed mobs and the military. Twice within one year did a terrified Parliament concede to an alarmed Ministry the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Troops of demagogues and their votaries were incarcerated on warrants of the Secretary of State, and the more conspicuous were arraigned as traitors. For the first time for seventy years in England, the brutal punishment decreed for high treason was inflicted. The Regent himself was insulted by the mob on his way to open Parliament, on which both Houses appointed secret committees to examine the alleged proofs of a general insurrection.

While such incidents formed to Ministers the grounds for their demands for dictatorial powers, they gave to the Opposition the occasion for impeachment of the Administration, for diatribes against the lavish scale of expenditure, and denunciations of the enormous drain on the impoverished resources of the country by sinecures, and the malversation of the endowed charities upon which even a larger number of parasites battered than those who lived upon the revenues.

Brougham succeeded in procuring his great Public Charities Commission, and the long and valuable economic services of Joseph Hume were inaugurated. As yet, how-

ever, he produced but little more effect than the magnanimous sacrifice of Lord Camden, who resigned £9,000 of the emoluments of his sinecure office of Teller of the Exchequer. This, however, was counterbalanced by the ineffable meanness of the Duke of York, who was base enough to accept the dotation of £10,000 a year which the House of Commons was lavish enough to grant as a stipend for his custodianship of his insane father, after the death of Queen Charlotte deprived the aged sovereign of his natural guardian.

On the vote for the Army Estimates for 1818, Lord Althorp proposed to reduce the number of men by five thousand, urging the frightful distress prevalent in the country, and dwelling on the enormous disparity between income and outgoings, the expenditure for the year previous having been sixty-five millions, while even the oppressive taxation had yielded only fifty-one. In the course of Lord Palmerston's rejoinder he said :—

“ I do not mean to uphold the principle that the increase of population renders a proportionate increase of our military force necessary, or that a numerous population ought to be governed by the edge of the sword. But I appeal to the experience of the last few years whether an increased population, depending upon agriculture and commerce, may not from particular circumstances, such as a change of season and want of employment, be worked upon in such a manner and brought into such a state of fermentation as to render life and property unsafe without the protection of a large military force? Most of the gentlemen present have seen a proof of this in the riots which took place on the subject of the Corn Laws about three years back, when a large military force was necessary to protect them from insult in their passage to and from this House.”

As might be expected, Lord Althorp's motion was lost. The only other occasions, during this session, in which Lord Palmerston addressed the House, save in the official performance of his duties, were on a somewhat meagre and unsatisfactory Copyright Bill, which he opposed; on the question of pensions to officers' widows, and on the claims of certain medical officers to share in the Waterloo prize money—that most fertile source of just discontent in the *British army*.

A loud reform cry, and the prevalence of public meetings, addressed by the most violent itinerant orators, continued to characterize the year 1819. In August, an enormous meeting was held at Manchester, the numbers attending it being variously estimated at from sixty to a hundred thousand persons. It was held in a square or open space known as St. Peter's Field; in which now stands the Manchester Free-Trade Hall, the arena in later times of encounters quite as animated, but a thousand-fold more beneficial and less bloodless than that which caused the bitterly ironical change of the designation from St. Peter's Field to "Peterloo," in mock allusion to the then recent victory of Wellington.

Henry Hunt, the great blacking manufacturer and the leading demagogue of the day, was the chief orator on the occasion. He had hardly commenced to address the meeting when a party of the Manchester yeomanry, acting under magisterial authority, charged through the dense crowd right up to the hustings. Many were sabred, crushed, and trampled to death. General execration followed this atrocity, an execration anything but allayed by the subsequent trial, conviction, and incarceration for lengthened periods of Hunt and his principal associates, or by the passing by Parliament, in its panic, of a law forbidding all such assemblages in future, unless they were convened with the sanction of the authorities. This enactment, with the Training and Arming Bill, the Libel Bill, &c., constituted the much flouted and abhorred "Six Acts."

The Catholic question was again brought forward this year, Palmerston still asserting his old liberal view, but with no better success than hitherto, for Grattan's annual motion was defeated, although only by the bare majority of 243 to 241. This was the last year of the splendid advocacy of this pure and unsullied patriot. The year following was that of his death. Palmerston, still apparently faithful to his purpose of adhering, with certain specific exceptions, to the topics directly pertaining to his office, took no part in such important discussions as that on Sir James Mackintosh's successful measure for the revision of our criminal code, or that on the resumption of cash payments, with which the name of Peel, Palmerston's old schoolfellow and colleague, had by this time become

chiefly identified. Nor did he utter a word on the Seditious Meetings' Prevention Bill, the most angrily and the most amply discussed measure of the session. The same abstention he displayed in the Blasphemous Libel and the Newspaper Stamp Duties Bills; others of the anti-popular measures of the Liverpool Government. In his own proper field he had the satisfaction of announcing a reduction of 9,800 men, and a consequent saving of nearly a million and a half of money. Nothing more notable occurred in the detailed discussion of the estimates, than his defence, against very captious Opposition attacks, of the establishment of a hospital for the treatment of ophthalmia, a malady which had become very prevalent among the soldiers.

After a reign of fifty-nine years, the longest of any English monarch, George III. died on the 29th of January, 1820. In due course, according to constitutional stipulation, a general election must ensue. The Ministers pressed it forward precipitantly; with, as the Opposition alleged, unnecessary, if not indecent haste, and with injury to the legislative business of the country. The Whigs alleged that the motive for the ministerial haste was, that they might take favourable advantage of the general timidity and alarm excited amongst the enfranchised minority by the popular execration which resulted from the "Peterloo" massacre. Lansdowne, Tierney, and others opposed the speedy dissolution on constitutional grounds of form and privilege; whilst Brougham had the daring to blurt out the real truth, and accuse the ministers of the covert motive of their celerity in dissolving. This year was memorable as the year of the trial of Queen Caroline, with all its attendant popular excitement. This was a very crisis in our national history. No one can read the family papers published, and nominally edited by the late Duke of Buckingham, and such other contemporary memoirs as have as yet seen the light, without discovering how closely the country stood upon the very brink of revolution. Palmerston pursued the calm and even tenour of his official way. Among the other business and legislative changes of the year, may be mentioned serious Parliamentary inquiries into the stagnation of trade and the prevalence of distress; discussions on reforms in the franchise and in finance; and Lord

John Russell's measure for the disfranchisement of Grampound, which was carried in spite of the hot opposition of Castlereagh and Canning. In none of these leading discussions of the year did the Secretary at War take part. Nor did he take any share in the debates on proceedings which were occasioned by the Cato-street conspiracy—an affair concocted from first to last by Government spies—which cost Thistlewood and four others their lives.

He had again to defend the military expenditure against the attacks of the Whig aspirants for power, and the economists on the benches below the gangway. The then recently founded military college—the nucleus of that which now turns out our highly trained officers of the Engineers and Artillery—was an especial object of attack. Palmerston vindicated its existence in a few pithy and conclusive sentences:—

“The effect of discontinuing this establishment would be to drive these young men to other quarters, and as they would have no means of defraying the expenses of a private education, they would probably be compelled to seek for instruction in German or French establishments, at that critical period when the impressions they received were calculated to decide the character of the future man. He regretted that he did not observe a gallant officer in his place who seldom omitted an opportunity of deprecating the introduction of foreign officers, and every assimilation to foreign customs in our troops; for he was persuaded that he would have concurred with him in the propriety of giving to our military youth the advantages of a military education. For his own part, he wished to see the British soldier with a British character, with British habits, with a British education, and with as little as possible of anything foreign.”

This last sentence will be accepted by all who watched the latter portion of Lord Palmerston's career, as a sentence peculiarly typical and representative of his character. For not the most violent and insolent of his critics, whether pitching his tent in the camp of Urquhart or in the camp of Bright, could with any show of reason deny the essential patriotism and John Bullism of Palmerston's nature.

In this session, in which the Opposition would seem to have been peculiarly anxious to make mountains of mole-

hills, and to seize every captious point of petty criticism, an attack was made on a vote in the estimate for a riding-school established at Pimlico for the purpose of teaching the dragoons an official and uniform style of equitation. Palmerston carried the vote, alleging the necessity for the proposed instruction; and alleging that in the recent war a foreign officer had uttered the highest eulogium upon the English cavalry, with but one important proviso—"If they could but ride!"

In June of this year, Lord Palmerston had just risen to move the Army Estimates, when, according to the contemporary reports, "Here the noble lord was seized with sudden indisposition, which for some time prevented his proceeding. He resumed his seat for a moment, then again rose and addressed the House; but after two or three ineffectual attempts to proceed, his indisposition seemed to increase, and by the advice of some of his right honourable friends, he sat down without bringing the Estimates to a conclusion." The ailment must have been slight; at least it was not of long continuance; for at a later period of the same evening he again brought forward the Estimates. During the recess, and without parliamentary sanction, the Ministry had enrolled a large additional number of veterans, or pensioners. This course they justified on the plea of the exigent circumstances of the day. They were taken severely to task by the Opposition, who alleged that they had been guilty of an infraction of the Constitution. Upon Palmerston naturally fell the duty of expounding and defending the course adopted. "He had been blamed," he said, "on a former occasion for not entering more at large into the reasons which had induced Ministers to think this addition to the force of the kingdom necessary. He could only repeat now what he had said before, that the reasons for this increase of force were so notorious to every person in the country, that he should consider any attempt on his part to argue the necessity, not only a waste of the time of the House, but as trifling with the public understanding. If the justification of this measure were not sufficiently established by the events which had taken place since August last [the month of the Manchester tragedy], he was certain that no argument he could use, and no eloquence ever heard within these walls, would carry conviction with it."

The same subject was again brought forward, in connection with a proposal by Lord Nugent to reduce the army by fifteen thousand men. On this second occasion Palmerston went much more deeply and elaborately into the constitutional question involved. The importance of his speech justifies a somewhat lengthened quotation:—

“With respect to calling out the Veterans, the noble lord considered it to be a violation of the Constitution. If, however, he looked back to the Constitution of this country, he would find many instances in which an augmentation had been made in time of peace, under an apprehension of approaching war, or of internal commotion. . . . Many instances had occurred in time of peace where an augmentation of the military force had been effected, without any bill of indemnity, or any measure of the kind mentioned by the noble lord being deemed necessary. He admitted the argument of the noble lord, that no force could be constitutionally embodied without the consent of Parliament; but that consent, he contended, had been obtained. In the speech from the throne, the intention of calling out this additional force was mentioned; and both Houses of Parliament, in their answer to the speech, plainly adverted to the circumstance. If, therefore, gentlemen conceived this proceeding to be unconstitutional, they would find it difficult to answer their country satisfactorily for having suffered so many months to elapse without having agitated the question. But not only was the circumstance mentioned in the speech from the throne, and in the address in answer to it, but a specific vote of money was agreed to for the subsistence of those troops.”

The following sentences contain a true mirror of the dangers of the times:—“The noble lord would ask, ‘Is it necessary now to keep up this additional force?’ In answer to that he would only ask gentlemen to turn their attention to the events that had passed since the period to which he had referred. He would forbear from adverting to the conspiracy that was discovered in London. A conspiracy to destroy some hundreds of individuals—to burn different parts of the metropolis—and to create a provisional government—was, it appeared, a matter of no importance to the gentlemen opposite. Did not the noble lord know that *special commissions* were issued for the North of



England, and for Scotland, to bring persons to trial for the highest crime the law of this country contemplated—the crime of high treason? Did he not know that the scenes which gave rise to these commissions took place in February and March last? Did not the noble lord know that meetings of armed men had taken place in Scotland? Was he not aware that, in one instance, a body of these men had acted in hostility to the regular troops? Had he not seen the proclamation that was posted up in the town of Glasgow, purporting to be issued by a provisional Government—the object of those signing it being, as they stated, ‘to obtain their rights by force of arms?’”

The concluding sentences of this historically important speech contained the following effective, though somewhat clap-trap, upbraiding of the Opposition:—“The noble lord said he had watched with jealousy the strides towards a military despotism that had been made of late years. He would say that, if there were any set of men who could drive them to a military despotism, it was those self-called but misled reformers, who demanded that sort of reform in the country which, according to every just principle of government, must end, if it were acceded to, in a military despotism. It was said that Government met with the sword the complaints of the people. This was not the fact; they only met with the sword those who endeavoured to stir up and to take advantage of those irritated feelings which were the offspring of distress. The use of that military force was to keep down those outrages which had the worst effect on the prosperity of the country. Perhaps the noble lord thought it was immaterial to the industry and welfare of the country to be on the verge of a civil war? Those who knew the extent of these outrages would agree with him, whatever the noble lord might think, that any measure which tended to preserve the peace of the country, tended also to maintain its prosperity. The Veterans had not been called out unconstitutionally, but to defend from the machinations of traitors those liberties which they had derived from their forefathers, and which, he hoped, they would transmit, unimpaired, to their children.”

One of the leading subjects of interest to English politicians and to the English people in the year 1831, was *the popular movements* which that year witnessed in

several continental countries, and the alliance formed between the three great northern powers, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, for the purpose of suppressing them by force.

In the succeeding chapter, where we shall have to record a stage in Palmerston's career in which he stood out much more prominently than we have yet discovered him to do, as the exponent and defender of certain principles of English foreign policy, we shall dwell with as much copiousness as our limits permit, on the well-known "Holy Alliance," and the methods by which Canning (Palmerston being ever his trusty supporter) restrained the operations of that eminently unholy compact and fraternity. Meanwhile, we content ourselves with such allusions to the affairs of the Continent as are necessary to the continuity of our narrative, and to the full understanding of what will be found in succeeding chapters.

The only allusion contained in the first speech from the throne delivered by King George IV., to the revolutions in Spain, Portugal, and Naples, consisted of an assurance that the country continued at peace with foreign powers, and an expressed determination, should the events in Italy lead to hostilities, to preserve this country from participation in them. The truth was, Castlereagh had committed himself to the policy of the German and Muscovite despots to a greater extent than the spirit of the country could tolerate; and the only available line for Ministers to adopt, was a prudent middle course—the policy of neutrality. A circular despatch was issued to our Ministers at foreign courts, disclaiming all participation in the plans of the allies.

In the Lords, Lord Grey tried hard to provoke an open proffer of assistance to the Neapolitans and others who were insurgent against those second-rate despots, whom nothing could teach, and who, upon their restoration after Waterloo and Vienna, madly restored the old shackles which had been the instruments of government ere the new order of things inaugurated in 1789. To all such efforts as Grey's, Ministers stolidly and unwaveringly replied, that the circular note despatched to our ambassadors gave sufficient evidence of the good faith of the Government towards the insurgent people, and especially the Neapolitans. Lord Liverpool and his colleagues seem to us to have been unquestionably in the right. It would

have been madness, in the then depressed state of the country, and so soon after a war which had strained its capacities to the very utmost, to have precipitated an encounter with three of the greatest military powers in Europe, who would in all probability have formed as general a continental combination against us as that which had overthrown Napoleon. Not even all the Whigs were of Lord Grey's way of thinking.

Sidney Smith ventured to address no other a personage than Lord Grey's wife in the following witty and sensible strain:—"For God's sake do not drag me into another war! I am worn down and worn out with crusading and defending Europe, and protecting mankind. I must think a little of myself. I am sorry for the Spaniards; I am sorry for the Greeks; I deplore the fate of the Jews; the people of the Sandwich Islands are groaning under the most detestable tyranny; Bagdad is oppressed; I do not like the present state of the Delta; Thibet is not comfortable. Am I to fight for all these people? The world is bursting with sin and sorrow. Am I to be the champion of the Decalogue, and eternally raising fleets and armies to make all men good and happy? We have just done saving Europe, and I am afraid the consequence will be that we shall cut each other's throats. No war, dear Lady Grey!—no eloquence; but apathy, selfishness, common-sense, arithmetic! I beseech you secure Lord Grey's sword and pistols, as the housekeeper did Don Quixote's armour. If there is another war, life will not be worth having."

Although the mass of the country intensely sympathized with the continental insurgents, we believe they shared the witty Canon's reluctance to active hostility. Even to Lord Lansdowne's modified urgency, that we should "exert our influence with the allied powers to prevent or repair the consequences of measures which might eventually disturb the tranquillity of Europe, and which threatened the independence of sovereigns and the security of nations"—Liverpool made answer in the same spirit. While condemning the conduct of the allies, he maintained that we had no right to prescribe a rule of conduct to Austria, and that it was unwise to remonstrate when we were not prepared to enforce our suggestions by arms.

Whether Palmerston concurred, in 1822, with this maxim of his chief, we have no means of knowing. This we do know, that he frequently departed from it in his own subsequent career. The truth is, Lord Liverpool's maxim, like most political maxims, applied very pertinently to certain cases—among others, that to which he fitted it. Probably the allies in 1822 would not have been moved by remonstrances which were not backed by threats.

On more than one occasion, in Lord Palmerston's career as Foreign Secretary and Premier, his remonstrances, although unbacked by threats, proved efficacious and beneficial.

The Laybach Congress of the Three Powers broke up with the memorable and execrable declaration that, "Useful or necessary changes in legislation, and in the administration of states, ought only to emanate from the free will, the intelligent and well-weighed conviction of those whom God hath rendered responsible for power"—meaning, of course, themselves. And they went on to say, that they regarded and declared as legally null, and as disavowed by the principles which constitute the public right of Europe, all pretended reforms operated by revolt and open hostilities." This declaration produced a very intense excitement in England. A formidable attack was made upon the Ministry for their alleged tame acquiescence in these monstrous doctrines; and an address was moved in the House of Commons, calling upon the King "to assume an attitude of more determined opposition to the introduction of new principles of the laws of nations, which, if acted upon, would not only prevent the establishment of all rational liberty, but tend to render perpetual despotisms of the worst kind."

To this and all such attacks the imperturbable Castlereagh made the stereotyped reply, that "the declaration of the 19th January (that which had been sent to our foreign ambassadors) had announced to the world our dissent from the principles acted upon at Troppau and Laybach, and no good could result from engaging in a war of state papers."

The Government were hard pressed on all questions during this session, and the pressure was the more severe that they had lost the valuable services of Canning.

who had retired from office in disgust at the time of the Queen's trial. The financial vagaries and shortcomings of their Chancellor of the Exchequer, Vansittart, also told strongly against them. It became necessary to seek accession of new strength. Vansittart was shelved with a peerage and a sinecure. They gained a valuable recruit in Peel, who returned to office after passing three or four years as a private member. And, above all, they secured the adhesion of the leading members of the Grenville clique, a small but influential party, who hung midway between Toryism and Whiggery. This liberalization of the Cabinet exercised a salutary influence upon the development of Palmerston's views. Ere long we shall discover its fruits.

Plunket, upon whom the mantle of the departed Grattan had fallen, carried the Catholic claims through the Commons, spite the resolute and exacerated opposition of Peel, by a respectable majority, only to have it contemptuously rejected by the Lords.

In moving the Army Estimates for 1821, Palmerston found that Joseph Hume was his most pertinacious assailant amongst the economists. The War Secretary thus jeocularly alluded to the painstaking accuracy of his opponent: "The honourable gentleman was incorrect both in his historical and arithmetical facts. He recollected that he had heard of an ancient sage who said that there were two things over which even the immortal gods themselves had no power—namely, past events and arithmetic. The honourable gentleman, however, seemed to have power over both, as he changed them just as suited his convenience. He had often heard that a little learning was a dangerous thing; he was afraid the honourable member had found it so on the present occasion; and he really should advise him to drink more largely before he again ventured to discuss matters of this nature. He had heard that the honourable member was the chairman of a self-constituted committee of finance. The resolutions which the honourable member had just moved were, he was told, the production of that body; and he was perhaps too severe in attributing the blemishes of them to the honourable member himself. He was likewise informed that this committee had an establishment of clerks. *Now, he gave the honourable member fair notice that if*

the discussions on these estimates were to be continued by him, and his friends, as was threatened, during twenty-one days, he should certainly move for a return of the salaries paid to these clerks, in order to ascertain whether their salaries were greater than their attention and ability deserved." It is due to Hume's memory to add that he equally repudiated the "clerks," and the divided responsibility for his opinions and figures.

In the course of the speech from which we have just quoted, Palmerston gave utterance to one of those pithy and concentrated administrative aphorisms with which his speeches were so frequently enriched :—

"There are three principles to which, in time of peace, it seems of importance to adhere in the constitution and division of a military force. The first is that the establishment should be economical; the next, that it should be efficient; and the third, that its organization should, in the event of war recurring, be such as to enable them to recruit the different regiments rapidly and cheaply."

The year 1822 was characterized by the preaching of panaceas for the national distress; one party prescribing higher protective Corn Laws, another the abolition of tithes, and a third, with Cobbett as its chief apostle, suggesting that the country should semi-repudiate the National Debt, by making, as it were, a composition with the fundholders. Palmerston took part in none of the controversies raised on these topics, nor did he signify by any publicly-uttered word his approval of the unprecedentedly stringent measures for the coercion of the discontented Irish which were the last leading acts of Castlereagh (now the Marquis of Londonderry) ere his inexplicable suicide.

Palmerston's great speech this session was in the case of Sir Robert Wilson—one precisely similar to that of Lord Dundonald, to which we have already made reference. Sir Robert Wilson was a general of high standing in the army, a Radical Member of Parliament, and a devoted friend and supporter of the cause of the Queen. The singular and indecent circumstances which attended the carrying the remains of the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick through the metropolis on their way to their final resting-place, and the conflict which occurred between the Life Guards and the mob, are matters of well-

known history, and need not be detailed by us. Sir Robert Wilson, who attended on horseback the funeral *cortège* as a mourner, endeavoured to restrain the mob, and, it was alleged, interfered in an irregular manner, and one very unbecoming a general officer, with the Guards, when some of them, losing self-command, fired upon the populace without any magistrate's or officer's order. For this Sir Robert was summarily cashiered, and deprived of the right to wear the British and foreign decorations he had gallantly earned in the field. He had also expressed publicly his strong disapproval of the whole course of conduct pursued by the Government to the Queen, and of the shameless indecency with which they extended their persecution to her inanimate remains. This was probably the real reason of Wilson's condign punishment. Sir Robert brought his own case before the representative body of which he was a member. He disclaimed all personal motives, and urged the views by which he supported the doctrine that he was the victim of an unconstitutional and dangerous exercise of the royal prerogative. Lord Palmerston replied in a speech which was in part a mere repetition of the arguments used in that on the Dundonald case, to which we referred in its proper place. But he also went at some length into the individual merits of Wilson's case, arguing that by that gentleman's own showing, he had been guilty of a most reprehensible and unmilitary offence; and contemptuously disclaiming the idea that Sir Robert's opposition to Ministers was so formidable as to have galled them into a feeling of vindictiveness against him. The following sentences give a very fair representation of what we may call Palmerston's forensic or special pleading style, at which he was an adept so facile as to involve considerable danger to his own conscience, at least at this period of his career.

"The honourable member clearly wished to insinuate that he had been divested of his commission on account of his political conduct in the House of Commons; that such had been his hostility to Government, and such the apprehension with which they regarded him, that they wished to punish him for his parliamentary conduct, if they could not deliver themselves from so formidable an opponent (loud cries of hear, hear, hear). Undoubtedly,

he could perfectly understand the spirit of those liberal and enlightened politicians, who could so deal with their political opponents as to suppose them capable of the mean and disgraceful conduct of getting rid of a political opponent by an act of official hostility. But really he thought the honourable member estimated his powers of hostility to his Majesty's Ministers at too high a rate, when he conceived that these powers had drawn down upon him such an exhibition of resentment. Against this invidious supposition on the part of the honourable gentleman, he would confidently appeal to the experience of the House and of the country, whether the conduct of his Majesty's Government in matters of that sort had been influenced by such a pitiful principle? Was the honourable gentleman the only member of the army who had evinced a systematic opposition in that House to the measures of his Majesty's Government? If the opposition of the honourable gentleman in Parliament were really the chief cause of his removal, at least that principle of conduct had not been seen in the case of a gallant general opposite. It had not been seen in the continuance of the honourable gentleman himself in the army so long as he had been continued. Had his Majesty's Government been influenced by any such mean and miserable feelings of resentment towards the honourable gentleman as that which he ascribed to them, they needed not have waited until the 14th of August, 1821, for ample opportunities of gratifying that disposition.

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"He would venture to say, without entering into all the details of the honourable gentleman's speech, that that speech itself afforded a strong presumption that the prerogative had been justly exercised in the present instance. First, he would say, that when a person held a commission in the service of the King, when he received the King's pay, when he was decorated with orders and titles, which as a British officer he could not have worn without the gracious permission of his sovereign, and when he nevertheless continued with a number of persons engaged in illegal proceedings, and opposing the legitimate orders of the King, his master, he was guilty of a direct and gross insult to the sovereign whom he served. This was a prominent feature in the honourable gentleman's own



statement, which, independently of any other consideration, justified the step which had been taken with respect to him. The honourable gentleman had stated that when he came up to Cumberland Gate, he saw the Life Guards broken and in disorder—that they appeared, to an eye experienced in military matters, as if they had been checked and repulsed. The honourable gentleman found them venturing their lives in an attack upon a furious populace. He found these brave men, who had so gallantly fought for their country, in a situation of considerable jeopardy. What did the honourable gentleman do on the occasion? He must have been aware of what must have been the duty of an officer under such circumstances. If he was not aware of that duty, he was unworthy of the commission which he bore. Was it possible, however, that the honourable gentleman could have acted in a manner more calculated to provoke military insubordination than—officer as he was—holding a commission, but not having any authority on that occasion—by addressing either the soldiers or the officers who were employed at the time, and who were responsible for the manner in which they performed their duties? It was an act of great military insubordination to address troops under such circumstances at all; but the language in which, by the honourable gentleman's own admission, he addressed them, highly aggravated the character of his military offence. The honourable gentleman admitted that he told the soldiers that it was disgraceful to continue firing. What judge was the honourable gentleman whether the men had disgraced themselves or not?

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“The honourable gentleman, a general officer, knew, or ought to have known, that by the rules and discipline of the army, he was guilty of a great breach of those rules and that discipline, by interfering with soldiers while in discharge of their duty.”

We have much more pleasure in citing the following high, and in our opinion unanswerable, constitutional maxims uttered by Palmerston in the course of the same speech as that from which the preceding extract is taken: “If that prerogative were relinquished, if an officer could not be divested of his commission but by the *decision of members of his own body, a fourth estate*

would be created in the realm most prejudicial to the constitution.

"Let Parliament once make the army independent of the Crown, and it would not be long ere the army would make itself independent of Parliament. In support of this truth, he would appeal to the annals of our history, in which the facts will be found written in characters of blood."

And later in the session, when Wilson's case was again brought forward, he thus condensed the same doctrine, though from another and an obscure point of view. "Whenever popular assemblies had attempted to command a military force, the thing had usually ended by that force commanding them."

These were wise and statesmanlike utterances. Palmerston, now thirty-eight years of age, had become a statesman. From this date he never lacked an opportunity of displaying in a larger arena with worthier associates, and under more auspicious circumstances, the now matured powers of a mind at once thoroughly disciplined and gradually opened itself to healthful and liberal influences. Old Toryism, as a power, died with Castlereagh; and Palmerston was not an Eldon to bemoan the defunct monster.

## CHAPTER VII.

## RÉGIME OF CANNING—LIBERALIZATION OF TORIISM.

A.D. 1822—1829.

**L**ORD PALMERSTON'S parliamentary and official career divides itself into four distinct and naturally defined periods—the period of his training in the duties of administration; the period of his education in the high principles of public policy; the period of his direction of our foreign relations, and the period of his premiership, of acknowledged leadership of his party, and headship of the nation.

We have concluded the consideration of the first of the four, and now enter upon the survey of the second. During the second stage, he obtained, in the external and official sense, no political preferment. He was not promoted from the War Office, except for a short time—the closing months of Canning's life, when that great man obtained the premiership which it had been better for England and the world that he had obtained twenty years before. Palmerston remained a member of the Ministry, but with no seat in the Cabinet. But the scope of his powers and the arena of his public appearances were thoroughly enlarged.

Palmerston had as yet, as we have seen, contented himself with centrelling his department, conducting its business, and defending its arrangements in Parliament. To this line he had, with rare modesty and abstention, hitherto confined himself; the one only exception being his periodical speeches in favour of the Catholic claims. From the date at which we have arrived, he allowed himself a much larger flight; than him, Canning found no more strenuous support in the defence of the splendid system of foreign policy which that king of men inaugu-

rated, that he might undo the hated work of Castlereagh, the Vienna parcellers out of Europe, and the unholy conspirators of the Holy Alliance.

When the first William Pitt was first called to assume supreme power in England, Frederick the Great roughly ejaculated—"England has been long in labour, but at length she has produced a man." With eminent appropriateness, an identical ejaculation might have been uttered when, in 1822, on the death of Castlereagh, Canning received the seals of the Foreign Office. Few, if any, great men have there been who were so cordially hated as Canning. He was hated by the peers and their cadets, because he was a *parvenu*; he was hated by the meaner of the populace, because he sprang from them, but rejected their principles, and refused to flatter their prejudices. He was hated by the pompous and the dull, because they feared the lash of his raillery. He was hated by the representatives of wit and genius, because their wit and genius, however cornuscating and lofty, were completely eclipsed and overshadowed by his. We should be disposed to allege that never was man, in public life and on public ground, so hated as Canning was by Eldon, did we not remember the gall of bitterness vented against Canning by Grey—a gall of bitterness the more infamous because the proud and aristocratic reformer of Howick hated Canning, not from honest political antagonism, as Eldon did, but from the mean personal feeling of envy at his outdoing him in that field of political popularity which, with true Whiggish instinct, he wished to monopolize as all his own. Hate pursued Canning into—nay, even beyond—the grave. And after his death, his widow, with justifiable bitterness, stigmatized the men who had sat with him on the same bench and in the same council-chamber, as his "murderers."

He who was so much hated by political rivals on his own side, and antagonists on the other, had the enjoyment of much countervailing love. If the Court and the Cabinet detested, the great mass of the people in time learned absolutely to adore him. If the despots of Europe quailed at his name, and, therefore, gnashed their teeth at him with bitter malignity, the whole enthralled peoples of Europe loved him as their deliverer. When he died, two continents wept; there was a universal wail

from Athens to Lima. Canning, too, had the rare good fortune of possessing the intense affection of his own personal political adherents. If Peel, Wellington, Eldon, and Bathurst followed him, like a pack of vengeful hounds, never was statesman sustained in a difficult position by more intense, braver, more unselfish devotion, than that displayed by such men as Lord Dudley, Sturges Bourne, Huskisson, Melbourne, and Palmerston.

Some of the finest traits in Lord Palmerston's later career, were the displays of protection and defence made by him in behalf of his subordinates in office. Nothing redounds more highly to the credit of Palmerston in his earlier—or, rather, mid—career, than the manner in which, while Canning lived, and after his death, when the indecent hands of faction could not refrain from desecrating the statesman's tomb, he defended the policy and vindicated the memory of his political chief. This, too, it must be remembered, at great political cost to himself, at the cost, if not of open rupture, at least of entire political alienation from men with the associates of whom, or under whom, he had served.

At great cost to himself, we have said; but likewise with great benefit to himself. His defence of Canning, his experience of the manner in which the Tories treated the only Tory who made Toryism decent and tolerable, gradually led Palmerston to Liberalism. His master conducted him so far; after his death, the pupil continued the journey. The result has been the establishment for ever of English foreign policy on a firm and unshaken basis of freedom and liberality.

Mr. Robert Bell, the admirable biographer of Canning, thus describes the transitional policy adopted by Canning in his latter career. We quote the passage, because every sentence, every word of it, as precisely applies to Palmerston as to Canning:—

By this principle Mr. Canning regulated his conduct. He owed no political allegiance to any party—he denied the divine right of aristocratic combinations. He joined the Administration because he agreed with the Administration, and in the exercise of the same unfettered discretion he would have left them, if he differed from them; he did leave them when the point of difference arose. The freedom, candour, and novelty of this course of action,

offended both Whigs and Tories—especially the latter, whose anger was inappeasable, that he should thus come between the wind and their nobility. But out of these elements of discord there was gradually rising up a Middle Party, which Mr. Canning called into life, with 'No Reform' inscribed on one side of its banner, and 'Free Trade and Catholic Emancipation' on the other. The importance of the functions assigned to this party in the tremulous state of transition through which the country was now passing, cannot be exaggerated. This party formed the only creditable retreat from obsolete doctrines which could neither be maintained with success, nor abandoned without humiliation. It flung a bridge across the chasm that divided the old times from the new, over which the legislature, pressed onwards by the people, was glad enough at last to make its escape."

The three positive aspects of this Canning-Huskisson party were liberal foreign policy, the abolition of commercial restrictions, and the removal of religious disabilities. Palmerston took no part in the frequent discussions on currency, corn bills, and customs. He was naïvely modest enough to confess, after he had been a cabinet minister, that he had not directed his attention to finance, but in this field deferred to the high judgment and ample knowledge of his friend Mr. Huskisson. The history of the Catholic question, from 1822 until 1829, the year of emancipation, may be dismissed in a sentence. The question was brought forward year after year, and warmly supported by the Liberals and the Canningites. In every year save one—the year of Canning's premiership—it was carried in the Commons. It ever had the support of Palmerston, always by his vote, on one or two occasions by speeches. It was as regularly thrown out in the Lords as it was passed in the Commons. Peel, Wellington, and the other Eldonites to the last violently opposed it. So strong did they represent their antagonism to the measure to be, that they refused to join the administrations of Canning and Lord Goderich, of both of which Palmerston was a member. At last, in 1829, the matter became too grave to be further opposed even by ultra-Toryism. The agitation by this time had assumed a new form, and obtained a new head. The popular appeals and demagogic utterances of O'Connell

were far different from, far more formidable than, the constitutional advocacy of Grattan and Plunket, than the expeditious course counselled by Canning, Huskisson, and Palmerston. The Catholic Association threatened to plunge Ireland once more into rebellion. O'Connell, and not the Viceroy Wellesley and Anglesea, proved himself to be the real ruling potentate in Ireland. The culminating excitement of the Clare election came, and Peel and Wellington conceded to the fear of revolution what they had refused to grant to the representations of justice and the counsels of enlightened policy. Palmerston was out of office at the time, and strongly opposed to Ministers on their foreign policy. It is to his honour that he showed no factiousness on this question. No newly-converted philo-Catholic of the Treasury Bench gave to Peel a more loyal and more unwavering support than he did. His first speech delivered in the House on any question unconnected with his official duties was on the Catholic claims—that which he delivered on the final discussion which preceded the settlement of this irritating question, which had done so much to impede good government, to weaken respect for the law, and to retard the progress of beneficial legislation, was one of the noblest and most sustained ever delivered in either House of the British Parliament.

It was in Canning's foreign policy that Palmerston was most at home. The public history of Canning from 1822 to 1827 is also the public history of Palmerston. If we trace the one, we follow the other.

Up to this date, it was Canning's proudest boast that he had indefatigably urged the undertaking of the Peninsular war, and warmly sustained its efficient conduct. It was his profoundest regret that the Treaty of Vienna had undone the very objects of the long European struggle against Napoleon. He had been out of office when it was contracted. It had, in his view, been a mighty instrument for shackling the nations, whose liberation was the professed object of the whole contest. It was now his avowed purpose to undo it, to emancipate England from the unfortunate complicity in the designs of the Holy Alliance in which she had been entangled by Castlereagh, and to establish, so far as was possible in *consistence* with a rigid policy of non-intervention, save

in very extreme cases, the bases and bulwarks of liberty in the Old World and the New. His foreign policy had chiefly to do with the following complications:—

He mediated betwixt Spain, who had extracted a constitution from her Bourbon king, and Louis and his minister Chateaubriand, who sent an army of occupation across the Pyrenees to restore the joint and congenial tyrannies of absolutism and priestcraft. When Spain, sucked back by the French arms into the vortex of despotism, attempted to deal in a similar manner with the revived and rising liberties of Portugal, Canning, by a wise and well-timed show of force, saved our ancient ally from the cruel grasp of her more powerful neighbour. When the North and South American colonies of Spain—Mexico and the settlements on the Southern main—had so far completed their revolutions as to assert their practical independence, it was Canning's duty to recognize the fact, to warn off France or any other aggressor of the Holy Alliance who would gladly, if unrestrained by Canning's firm attitude of defiance, have undertaken to win the territories of the rebels back to the dynasty which had once ruled not only "Spain" but "the Indies." It was also Canning's endeavour—alas! as events since his death have proved a somewhat unsuccessful one—to assist the Indo-Spaniards of the New World to establish firm governments and prosperous states. In every possible way he encouraged their development, and the English people caught the contagion. Thousands of enthusiastic English youths, commanded by hundreds of half-pay officers, heroes of the Peninsula and Waterloo, weary of the inglorious ease and the meagre pittance of peace, went out to aid the insurgents. And Lord Palmerston made the extraordinary statement in his place in the House of Commons, that in the course of a few years the English people had embarked not less than a hundred and fifty millions sterling in loans to the South American republics, and in other undertakings for their advantage. Greece, too, the enthusiasm for which had been enkindled by the burning verse of Palmerston's old Harrow contemporary, was not forgotten. Greece had been the object of Canning's boyish devotion and the subject of his first poetical effort. He survived not to see her entirely free from the hated bondage of the



Moslem unbeliever, but he lived to contract an international agreement with France and Russia, by which her independence was secured. He slept in peace in Westminster Abbey ere the guns of Navarino shattered the Turkish fleet, and restored to Hellas that freedom which she had never enjoyed from the day when the Macedonian subjugated her at Chæroneæ. Elijah had been withdrawn, but a worthy Elisha wore his mantle. None more loudly than Palmerston applauded the bravery of Capo d'Istrias and the prowess of Codrington. Palmerston helped largely to give Greece freedom. He helped to give her a constitution and a dynasty. Ere his long career is closed, he has been the one man in Europe who gave to her a new line of kings, after the incapacity and venality of Bavarian Otho had entailed his indignant ejection. Great and glorious days for England were those of the Foreign Secretaryship and Premiership of Canning—days when England stood first in the counsels of the world. Under Canning, England was as prominent and as dominant as she was under Chatham; but unlike the glorious epoch of Chatham's administration, under Canning, we, being ever prepared for war, were never at war. Our victories were victories of peace—but of peace who ever had her hand on her sword-hilt. These days are a part of the history of England—they are part of the history of Canning—they are part also of the history of Palmerston.

When called upon for an explanation of his policy, Canning declared its intention to be to restrain "an assumed jurisdiction of the congress (of 'Holy Allies') ; and the keeping within bounds that *areopagitical* spirit which was beyond the sphere of the original conception and understood principles of the alliance." At the same time he deprecated war, save when absolutely inevitable. All distinctions, even those of the broadest and most salient character, are mockingly sneered at by vulgar and by impassioned minds. Canning had more than the usual share of this sort of misconception to encounter. He was perpetually reproached by enemies on the lookout to catch him tripping, and by liberals of a red-hot enthusiasm pressing him on behind, with what *they* termed the inconsistency of not proceeding to *their* logical conclusion of war, which they said necessarily sprung from

the manliness and outspokenness of his protest against enthroned wrong. This feeling was represented, in the session of 1823, in a motion about our negotiations with Spain, brought forward by a Mr. Macdonald, a gentleman now unknown to fame, who, however, made a very good, though extreme, speech. He taunted the ruling faction with the general disappointment about the results of the great war, and alleged that it produced nothing save our alliance with the despotic powers of Europe.

He brought forward resolutions to the effect, that the Duke of Wellington, an envoy at the Congress of Vienna, had not protested against the decisions of that body with sufficient firmness; that the failure to preserve the peace of Europe chiefly arose from that cause; and that the country regarded with surprise and regret the advice given by Ministers to the Spanish Government when menaced by France, to alter their constitution; especially as they had no guarantee from the French Government that any concession by the Spaniards would induce the withdrawal of the Duc d'Angoulême's army of occupation.

In the debate which ensued, and which lasted several nights, there is a wonderful array of great parliamentary names. On the first night Cam Hobhouse—that furious republican, who was in later days tamed and quieted by a peerage—Baring, Lord Francis Leveson Gower, and Wilberforce spoke. On the second, Huskisson, Sir James Mackintosh, Peel, and Burdett. The debate was resumed on the third night by Charles Wynne, a family and political ally of the Grenvilles. After one or two short speeches by obscure members, Palmerston rose and delivered the first of his recorded speeches on a matter of high foreign policy. He vindicated the course of Government. We never meant war; we could not well afford war after our twenty years' superhuman struggle, and we had never threatened war. Faithful as we were to the doctrine of neutrality, and therefore precluded from giving the Spaniards active assistance, we did the next best thing we could do for them. We did our best to dissuade France from her aggression. It had been said that a higher moral tone ought to have been taken by this country, and that true and just principles ought to have

been more prominently put forward. If, indeed, the Government, instead of labouring to preserve the peace of Europe, had only thought of getting up a case for the House of Commons, it would have been easy to have written papers to satisfy the keenest cravings of the most constitutional appetite. But the object of the Government was not to lay a good foundation for a parliamentary debate, but to persuade those (foreign Governments) whom they were addressing. It was no use making declarations about the principles of liberty to despots. They must be met upon their own, or upon neutral ground. If one wishes to convince men, one must apply one's arguments to principles which they recognize. If one wishes to persuade them, one must urge motives whose influence they feel. Still, the principles of liberty were asserted, because it was due to the character of ourselves to do so. We maintained the injustice of interference, but urged strongly the improbability of its success. We denied the right of France to dictate a government to Spain, but pressed upon her the danger of creating a revolution at Paris, by endeavouring to put down a revolution at Madrid. He denied that the counsels given to Spain to make concessions were dishonouring to her. They were given in a spirit of friendliness. They were given on their merits. The Spaniards had gone too far. Sorry, indeed, would he be to live under such a government. He also justified the channel through which the advice had been communicated. Surely the Duke of Wellington was the very man to please the Spaniards; and he, finding himself in his former field of glory, would have his old feelings of regard for them warmed and revived. He concluded by repeating, that Ministers were defensible, alike on grounds of principle and policy.

In his view of the excess of liberty provided by the Spanish revolutionary Constitution of Cadiz, Palmerston has since been amply confirmed by Lamartine, who says that "it left only the shadow of royalty, surpassed in democracy the Constitution of 1791 in France, and was nothing, in fact, but a republic masked by a throne. It threw into the shade the charter of Louis XVIII., and the mixed Constitution of Great Britain." At this time, he goes on to say, "Europe was slipping from beneath

e monarchies ; all felt it, and most of all the revolutionists of Paris."

Many motives, and especially the fact that Spain had been our battle-field, induced the English people to take a very different view. Statesmen, too, feared a new family compact among the crowned heads. The Cabinet leant decidedly, though prudently, toward the popular sympathies. It had fairly begun to recover its popularity—thanks chiefly to the tardy elevation of Canning to a position appropriate to his merits. The King had recently received intoxicating applause from the populace of Dublin and Edinburgh, who, with all the rest of the land, but two years before had been filled with execration against his base behaviour to his wretched wife. Probably a majority of the Cabinet favoured foreign liberalism; accordingly, their inclinations coincided with their desire to continue in the possession of the newly arisen popular favour.

During Canning's keen contest for Liverpool, when his seat was vacated by his acceptance of office, he had been thrown much among the leading merchants of that city, and had become acquainted and imbued with their sanguine expectations about the immense benefits which would accrue to England from the establishment of South American independence. He himself utterly abhorred the idea of his own and Wellington's work in Europe being undone. He would go to any extremity to prevent that calamity. All this was extremely favourable to the development of liberal ideas in the mind of Palmerston. As his views expanded, he gained confidence and spirit. Session by session we find him a more frequent speaker, and upon more various themes.

It is pleasant to find him, in the same session, furnishing his modern admirer with views upon corporal punishment in the army, which considerably modify the pain which attends the discovery that he, whenever called upon, persistently defended the practice.

The War authorities had deprived a Colonel Allen of twelve months of his seniority, and thereby placed his name beneath many officers who were his juniors by service, without the formality of a court-martial; and further, they had enforced upon him the alternative of *retiring upon half-pay or selling out*. Palmerston justifi-

the Government, when the matter was brought forward in Parliament, on the old constitutional principle, behind which he so frequently intrenched himself, that the right of dismissing officers without courts-martial was "a power held, not for the benefit of the Crown, but for the maintenance of the rights and liberties of the people." Certainly, if his view was right, no case stronger than that of this colonel could arise. And it seems surprising that it was the rigour, and not the leniency, of the punishment inflicted upon him that was complained of. Within a very short interval Allen had flogged seventy-nine of his men, inflicting 4,817 lashes. This was in direct opposition to the order of his general, that no punishment should be inflicted until the offence and sentence had been reported to him. Men had received twenty-five lashes for having blank cartridges in their pockets instead of their cartouche-boxes. Another had been flogged because "he went from the carry to the support," that is, supported his firelock in the ranks with the angle of the arm, instead of the palm of his hand. Another had been punished for "levelling his piece!"

"One would suppose," said Palmerston, "from the wording of this charge, that a mutiny had taken place in the regiment, and that this man had levelled his musket, charged to the muzzle, at his commanding officer. But the fact was, that the unsoldier-like conduct complained of was 'for levelling his piece in the air when the regiment was practising with blank ammunition.' It appeared that the offender, instead of levelling with mathematical precision, had presented his piece in an angular direction, towards the horizon. Now, when an individual who had exerted his authority for the punishment of such trifles, came forward and complained of severity, could the House be expected to interfere? *Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?*"

The same general question of dismissal without court-martial was again introduced by Colonel Davies, in the discussion of the Mutiny Bill. The Colonel's speech drew from the War Secretary this among other emphatic utterances:—

"According to the amendment, the House would create a fourth estate in the kingdom, and convert the army into a power most dangerous for the country. Instead of

being subordinate to the proper authority, and incorporated with the practice of our Constitution, the army would be changed into a corps of Mamelukes, who would very soon overthrow the laws, and annihilate all power but their own."

Of the many speeches on subjects unconnected with the business of his department, which we find Palmerston delivering in 1824, 1825, and 1826, we must content ourselves with presenting only three samples. The Chancellor of the Exchequer having moved for, and obtained, a committee to inquire into the building of new churches for the humbler classes, Palmerston, whilst disclaiming all hostility to the Dissenters, expressed a strong desire to witness and promote the growth of the Established Church.

"It is my wish," said he, "that the Established Church should be the predominant one in this country, for nothing, I am persuaded, can tend more to the general tranquillity and happiness of a people than a community of sentiment, as far as it can be obtained without intolerance to any party, in matters of religious doctrine."

Forty years before the achievement of the long talked-of plan for the embankment of the Thames, Palmerston thus expressed himself:—

"Every man who had been in Dublin and Paris, spoke in praise of their quays, and drew comparisons to the disadvantage of London. Foreigners said, 'Well, we have seen your town, but where is the Thames?'"

In 1826, he presented a petition from the University of Cambridge against slavery, and expressed his conviction that it was "in vain for the colonial legislatures to think that, however they might retard, they could ultimately defeat a measure supported by the concurrent sentiments of the people of Great Britain. If they persevered in their resistance, they might raise against themselves such a storm of public opinion as no prudent man would wish to encounter."

On the 11th of December, 1826, a message was sent by the King to both Houses, stating that "an earnest application had been received by his Majesty from the Princess Regent of Portugal, claiming, in virtue of the ancient obligations of alliance and amity subsisting between *his Majesty and the Crown of Portugal, his Majesty's aid*

against a hostile aggression from Spain." The Liberal movement in Spain had been repressed by the French arms, and the restored despotic faction now attempted to perform a similar outrage on Portugal, whose liberality of government was too near at hand not to excite their alarm, and the rapacity which sprang from it. Canning said, the only question was, had a *casus fœderis* arisen? He decidedly believed it had. Bands of royalist deserters, the tools of Don Miguel, having been equipped in Spain, had invaded Portugal. English troops, he stated, were proceeding to the protection of our ancient ally at the very moment at which he spoke.

"We go," he said, "to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted, foreign dominion shall not come."

The effect produced in the House was electrical, and was fully matched by the enthusiasm of the country. Joseph Hume tried remonstrance, but his effort was altogether unavailing. The consequence of the sagacious celerity of Canning's action, and the firm and unanimous attitude of the country, was that war was averted, and Portugal saved. France, who was the real principal in the aggression, was quite cowed. We procured one of our greatest national victories, without a blow struck or a life lost.

Shortly after this, Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, was stricken down by a paralytic stroke. It was so serious, that it was some time ere he was able even to send in his resignation. At last it came, and the King, reluctant though he was, was compelled to send for Canning. All those whom he would have preferred for the post were disqualified by one cause or other; Eldon by his age, Wellington by his military habits, Peel by his youth. Peel was consulted, and gave it as his opinion that a Ministry adverse to the Catholic claims could not stand. After a fortnight's suspense and difficulty, Wellington, Eldon, Peel, Bathurst, Melville, and Westmoreland resigned. They were even more mortified by the elevation of a man whom they considered a *parvenu*, than by the triumph of the Liberal principles with which his name was identified. Canning at once made overtures to the Liberal chiefs. Lord Eldon says in a letter of this period :—

"The whole conversation in town is made up of abusive, bitterly abusive, talk of people about each other; all fire and flame; I have known nothing like it. I think political enmity runs higher, and waxes warmer than ever I knew it."

The great Whig peers were as much exasperated as the Tories. Lord Grey was especially bitter. Nevertheless, a splendid administration was formed. The chief accessions were Lyndhurst in room of Eldon; the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV.) as Lord High Admiral; Anglesea as Master-General of the Ordnance, in lieu of Wellington; Lords Goderich and Dudley, Sturges Bourne, and, after a few weeks, Lord Lansdowne. Palmerston retained his old post, but was made for the first time a member of the Cabinet.

Alison says of Canning's Ministry, and especially of its infusion of new blood:—

"By these appointments the Government became entirely Whig or Liberal, and the long-established dominion of the Tories, established by Mr. Pitt in 1784, was subverted."

Many of the advanced Liberal members gave their open adhesion to the Government; Tierney and Brougham, Burdett and Wilson, taking their seats in a marked manner behind the Treasury bench on the first occasion of Canning's taking his place as premier.

A spectator stated of this event:—"People were as anxious to see Canning as if a change of his person had accompanied his change of place."

There had been great bribery at the last elections, and in the cases of the rotten boroughs, Penryn and East Retford, it had been so gross that leave was applied for and given to bring in disfranchising bills. The Government only proposed to extend the franchise to the adjacent hundreds, that being, as Canning said, "a mitigated penalty, suited to the nature of the offence proved; although in more flagrant cases, such as Grampound, he should not hesitate to vote for total disfranchisement." The Whigs, under Lord Milton and Mr. Brougham, went for total disfranchisement, but were defeated by a large majority. No decision was arrived at as to the places to which the privilege should be transferred. The Whigs claimed at least one seat for a great unrepresented town, and elected



Birmingham for the privilege; but the session closed without any decision being arrived at. We shall presently see that this apparently small question of the disfranchisement of one or two rotten boroughs, and the transfer of their privilege of representation, had very important effects upon the career of Lord Palmerston. It was really the premonitory symptom of the great Reform struggle of four years later, and was the agency, or, to reproduce Mr. Bell's metaphor, the "bridge," which carried Palmerston from that attitude of opposition to all electoral reform, which was one of the cardinal peculiarities of the Canningite school, to such a change of view as enabled him to sit side by side with such extreme reformers as Brougham, Althorp, and Durham, in the cabinet of Earl Grey.

Canning attended the funeral of the Duke of York in Westminster Abbey, and caught a cold, which proved to be mortal, while standing on the cold flags of the cathedral. He accepted an invitation to pass some days at the villa of the Duke of Devonshire at Chiswick. His apartment was that in which Fox had died twenty years before—an ominous coincidence, which was gravely remarked upon by Lady Holland. The omen proved too significant. There also Canning died; and the great leader, who, more than all other men put together, influenced and moulded the character of Palmerston, no longer affected him by his living presence and inspired him by his personal example. But Canning had been more than a statesman—he was the founder of a school of statesmen. With this school Palmerston continued to act. They were numerically weak, and alienated from the two great parties on either hand. This made mutual support more essential, and elevated and refined the mere political tie which united them into a sentiment of personal regard all the more intense, that its fundamental bond was a common love for the memory of him who had passed away. We shall see that they acted under all contingencies in perfect concord, together enjoying office and prosperity, and all making common cause when one was assailed, ardently vindicating his reputation, and gladly sharing his ostracism from office. They continued to act together as a distinct body until their natural absorption into the Whig ranks a few years later.

On Canning's death, the King appointed Lord Goderich

to form a ministry. A few changes in the *personnelle* of the Administration occurred. The Duke of Wellington returned to the Horse Guards. "Still, on the whole," says Alison, "the Cabinet remained of a Whig character." This Ministry had a very troubled and a very brief existence. The yeomanry were very hateful to the people, owing to the part which one of their squadrons had taken in the "Peterloo massacre." Ministers brought in a bill to reduce their numbers from thirty-five to thirteen thousand. The whole squirearchical interest, already the most disaffected section of the supporters of the Government, were up in arms at this sweeping proposal. But the *coup de grâce* to Goderich's Administration came from within the Cabinet. A "Finance Committee," for the purpose of a general overhauling and reform of the fiscal concerns of the nation, had been one of the most important political legacies of Canning. The Cabinet was divided as to whether or no the name of Lord Althorp should be included on the committee. Nor could they settle their differences on this simple point. Messrs. Huskisson and Herries threw up their offices, upon which Goderich, finding it impossible to go on after the defection of such important allies, at once placed his resignation in the King's hands. These transactions did not in any way affect Lord Palmerston, who does not appear as taking part in any stage of their development.

The Duke of Wellington was sent for, and accepted the responsibility of forming a ministry. Several important changes took place in the formation of the Cabinet. Tierney, Scarlett, and Lansdowne retired. Peel, Goulburn, Melville, and Bathurst came back. All the Canningites remained. There was a general feeling of displeasure that these gentlemen should continue to hold office under a man who had sought so many opportunities of avowing his dissidence from the policy of Canning, and of opposing its detailed measures. Canning's widow went so far as to write to Huskisson, reproaching him with "sitting side by side with her husband's murderers." The Canningites severally justified their conduct.

On the 31st of January (1828), Palmerston thus vindicated himself. In the formation of the Ministry, he alleged, there had been, of course, no stipulations.

Neither side could make nor receive them. But when he was assured that the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Huskisson), for Foreign Affairs (Lord Dudley), and the President of the Board of Trade (Charles Grant), had been invited, that was enough for him. "The confidence, therefore, which I had in joining the Government was founded upon the conviction that all the public principles on which I would purpose to act would be embodied in their measures." When taunted with associating with colleagues whose views on the Catholic question differed from his own, he justified himself on the ground that public opinion had not become ripe for legislation on the subject. "No Ministry could carry it." And, demanded he, "Is a difference on this question absolutely to prevent public men from acting together in public life?"

The chief topic of the King's speech this year was an account of the good offices undertaken between the Porte and the Greeks, by Great Britain, in conjunction with Russia and France; and it expressed regret at a "collision, wholly unexpected by his Majesty, which took place in the port of Navarino between the fleets of the contracting powers and that of the Ottoman Porte." But it was hoped that further hostilities would be averted. An address to match was moved in the Commons. In the debate which followed, Brougham and Althorp both took part. Brougham objected to the communicated posthumous recommendation of Ministers by Lord Liverpool. He lamented that they did not take credit for the engagement at Navarino. He especially objected to the expression, "untoward event," and blamed Ministers for what he denominated their implied censure of Codrington. In a powerful passage he assailed the conjunction in the person of the Duke of Wellington of the two discordant offices of Premier and Commander-in-Chief—head of the Army and head of the Exchequer; denounced his enjoyment of all the patronage of State, and concluded with the now historical "schoolmaster abroad" peroration. Yorke, Banks, and Althorp succeeded, the latter repeating the charges and allegations of Brougham. In reply to Althorp and Brougham, Palmerston having first justified the terms of reference to Navarino, thus defended the Duke:—

"The honourable and learned gentleman had a peculiar

pleasantry and humour in his remarks, which made them amusing, even to those at whom they were most especially pointed: but he certainly had not displayed good taste in the manner in which he had been pleased to advert to the military character of the Duke of Wellington. The claims which that noble and gallant duke had established to the gratitude of his country, stood upon a basis too firm to be shaken by any taunts or sneers that might be thrown out against them. . . . There was one topic upon which he was glad to be able to relieve the alarms of the honourable and learned gentleman. The military office formerly held by the noble duke would not be united to the political. From the present time the Duke of Wellington would cease to be Commander-in-Chief. Another objection taken by the hon. and learned gentleman to the present Prime Minister was, that the noble duke's habits and experience had been military and not civil. But the hon. and learned gentleman himself had admitted that, in the speech in which the noble duke, with an honourable modesty, had disclaimed the possession of talents which qualified him for the first situation in the country; the very terms and manner in which that disclaimer was made showed that the modesty of the speaker far underrated his own capacities. And surely the personal knowledge of the honourable and learned gentleman must sufficiently instruct him that the whole of the Duke of Wellington's experience had not been confined to the army. The House at least would know that there had scarcely been an important transaction in Europe for the last thirteen years in which the noble duke, at home or abroad, had not directly taken a part."

Palmerston sat for a close borough; his colleague, Huskisson, for an open one, Liverpool. The latter had, on going before his constituents for re-election, to explain the considerations which induced him to accept office under the Duke of Wellington. It will be recollected that Palmerston, in his place in the House of Commons, defended his course on the simple ground of the reassuring presence of his Canningite colleagues in the Ministry. At the Liverpool hustings Huskisson took higher ground. He told his constituents that the new Ministry was pledged to the same principles as the old.

The Catholic question was to be an open one, as it ever had been; and the foreign policy associated with Canning's name, as it had characterized the Ministry of Lord Liverpool ere Canning's elevation, would also distinguish that of Wellington, which had succeeded, on his decease. He had received, he said, from the Duke positive and special pledges that a particular line of policy should be followed, and that his Grace should tread in all respects in the footsteps of Mr. Canning. To this speech the Duke made an indignant rejoinder in the House of Lords. Pledges, he said, had never been asked by Mr. Huskisson and his friends. If they had been asked, they would have been indignantly refused. Huskisson subsequently softened down his statements in the House of Commons. The "pledges" to which he had referred were not explicit verbal undertakings, but the practical guarantees furnished by the continued presence in the Cabinet of the gentlemen with whom he had more especially been accustomed to act.

This was the apparent end of the misunderstanding. But to all gifted with the faculty of observation, it was evident that the tie which bound Huskisson and his friends to the Cabinet was of the most fragile character, and that the very slightest disrupting force would sever it. This was not long wanting. On the Penryn disfranchisement bill, Ministers voted against the transfer of the seat to Birmingham. Huskisson, being bound by a hustings pledge to his constituents, voted for it. He at once put his office in the Duke's hands. The Duke instantly advised the King to accept his resignation. This was to the surprise of Huskisson, who had meant rather to tender his resignation than absolutely to resign, and having expected some general explanation or negotiation with the Duke, not the instant acceptance of his resignation. He sent first Lord Dudley, and then Palmerston as his emissaries to the Duke, representing this view, and pointing out the "mistake." But the Duke emphatically replied—"It is no mistake; it can be no mistake, and it shall be no mistake."

After this further parley was useless. The whole of the Canningites at once resigned. Their places were filled by Sir George Murray, Lord Aberdeen, Sir Henry Hardinge, and Vesey Fitzgerald. This completely altered

the character of the Cabinet. All traces of the liberal element were expunged. It was as true blue Tory as Eldon himself could have wished it.

Having given an *abrégé* of the speech in which Lord Palmerston gave his reasons for joining the Wellington Administration, we present a summary of his alleged reasons for leaving it. His Grace, he said, had been guilty of great rapidity in submitting the letter of Mr. Huskisson to the King. He had refused all explanations. He had shown "the greatest possible alacrity to take advantage of Mr. Huskisson's resignation." When he saw that there was no possibility of accommodation, there was but one course open to him. He could not remain in the Cabinet after Mr. Huskisson had left, because he had been the great inducement that caused him to go into it.

Palmerston agreed too with Huskisson in the opinion which led to the difference. It was as an *enemy* of electoral reform that he supported the transfer of the franchise to such large places as Birmingham; for thereby he held the mouths of the more clamorous reformers would be stopped, and the necessity of more sweeping measures avoided.

On the question of a public provision for the family of Mr. Canning, which was most indecently opposed by those very members of the House who for the most part were inclined to lavish expenditure, the man Palmerston threw off the mask of the statesman. "His name," he said, "would be venerated long after his detractors had been consigned to oblivion. As to the plea of economy, the setting it up on the occasion was calculated to disgust the House with the very name."

Tory as was the Cabinet of the Duke of Wellington, it was compelled by the force of circumstances to effect the repeal both of the Catholic and the Protestant Dissenting disabilities ere its dissolution. The attitude of Lord Palmerston after his resignation was on the whole friendly to Ministers—at least on all measures of domestic policy. He warmly supported their Catholic Relief Bill; but, on grounds perfectly consistent with the general tenor of the opinions and policy of his whole life, he spoke and voted against Lord John Russell's proposal to annul the Test and Corporation Acts. In the debate on this question,

on the 26th of February, 1828, Palmerston, while declaring his opposition to the repeal, alleged that he was as much a friend as Lord John himself to civil and religious liberty. But he said that no danger had arisen to the State from theological opinions of any class for many years back.

All these disorders had arisen from causes purely political, and entirely unconnected with religious differences. Precautionary tests, if any were requisite, ought to be of a political and not of a religious character. As for their being safeguards and bulwarks of the Established Church, that was a pitiable admission of the weakness of that institution. Why not, then, said he, repeal the tests under discussion? His answer was that they were already practically repealed. The annual Indemnity Acts, merciless and severe though they were, had converted them into a dead letter. The only question was, was their dormant existence an evil of sufficient magnitude to call for the intervention of Parliament? He thought practical grievances should be taken up ere they legislated about those of a theoretical character. He did not choose to begin with the lesser evil, and leave the greater untouched. He would begin with the greater, and when that was brought down to the level of the lesser, then he should be prepared to consider the whole subject in a general view, and to deal with both classes upon a common and uniform principle. The proceeding recommended must necessarily tend to increase the distrust of the Catholics. Parliament was refusing, session after session, to reduce their real grievances, and now they were called upon to relieve the Dissenters from grievances that were theoretical, or at least extremely trivial.

In the succeeding year, Palmerston delivered the last speech that it was necessary for him or any other advocate of the cause to deliver in favour of the removal of the Catholic disabilities; the repeal being carried in this year.

He not only defended the measure brought in by the Government, but vindicated its authors from the charge of desertion of principle, they having been in previous years the leaders of the opposition to this great measure of justice.

*"He thought that his honourable friend (Mr. Peel)*

had acted in a direct, manly, and honourable manner. When once he had come to a conviction that the dangers of further resistance were greater than those contingent on the settlement of this question, he pursued a manly course in recommending to his sovereign the settlement—the favourable consideration of this great question.”

He concluded with the following happy eulogium on the measure :—“I cannot sit down without expressing the satisfaction which I feel, in common with the nation at large, at the determination which the Government has at last adopted to give peace to Ireland. It will open a career of happiness to Ireland which for centuries she has been forbidden to taste, and to England a prospect of commercial prosperity and national strength which has hitherto been a stranger to its annals. The labours of the present session will link together two classes of the community which have too long been dissevered ; they will form in history the true mark which is to divide the shadow of morning twilight from the brilliant effulgence of the risen sun ; they will form a monument—not of the crime or ambition of man—not of the misfortunes or the convulsions of society—but of the calm and deliberate operation of Benevolent Wisdom watching the good of the human race. And we ought to be proud that our hands are to be employed in a measure which will pass down to the latest posterity as an object of their respect, gratitude, and admiration.”

The Catholic Disabilities Repeal Act was accompanied by another for the disfranchisement of the Irish forty-shilling freeholders, a compromise with the opponents of the measure which was held to be necessary in order to ensure the success of the bill, but which Brougham characterized as “the almost extravagant price of the inestimable good.” Amongst the few who opposed it as “an unnecessary exercise of questionable right,” were Huskisson and Lord Palmerston.



## CHAPTER VIII.

PALMERSTON OUT OF OFFICE.—AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL AND GREECE.

A.D. 1828—1830.

NOTHING could have happened more fortunately for the continuance of the development and liberalization of Lord Palmerston's political opinions than his rupture with the Tory party under Wellington. Possibly this rupture would not have continued permanent; for, although the cardinal and professed principles on which the Wellington Administration came in was the reversal to a great extent of the liberal policy of Canning, they found themselves compelled, as we have seen, to follow his example, and accept, however reluctantly, the heritage of one of his most valuable legacies, in passing the Catholic Emancipation Act. This concession, the obliteration of this the chief ground of difference between the inveterate and the more liberal Tories, might have paved the way for a reconciliation between the Eldonites and the Canningites; but it was otherwise decreed. The great continental and English convulsions of 1830 arrived. Their influence magnetically affected the Canningites. They widened the abyss, and threw down that "bridge" to which we have already alluded, and which did most excellent service in its appointed day between the two parties. The Canningites followed the natural law of political gravitation, adhering to the party to which on the whole they had the greatest affinities. Amongst the others, Palmerston found himself Cabinet Minister in a Whig Administration, taking service under one of the most indefatigable, and certainly far from the most generous of Canning's parliamentary opponents. From that day Palmerston threw in his lot with the Liberals;

his bonds to Toryism, even in its more modified form, were permanently severed.

But ere we briefly narrate the story of the Reform Administration and Palmerston's share in its doings, let us see how it was—by what previous preparations and public appearances—that Palmerston was at once asked to take the seals of the Foreign Office when Lord Grey assumed the portfolio resigned by Wellington. Immediately, or almost immediately upon Canning's death, Palmerston was generally recognized as the especial inheritor of Canning's mantle on matters of foreign policy, as Huskisson was in the departments of free trade and financial reform. As an independent member, Palmerston spoke much on this class of subjects, devoting himself with especial zeal to the question of the enfranchisement of Portugal and Greece; and he was quickly admitted to be the greatest parliamentary master of this class of subjects. The main purport of Palmerston's speeches on foreign policy, in the interval between his last employment under a Tory chief and his first under a Whig, was the most pertinacious urgency that the Wellington Administration should remain loyal to its engagements with Portugal against the usurper Miguel, and should insist upon a sufficient amount of their ancient territory being conferred upon the emancipated Greeks as would make their state sufficiently compact and extensive, and secure their thorough independence. After Navarino, Russia had continued a separate cause of quarrel between herself and Turkey. She had sent Diebitsch across the Balkan. He had the Porte at his mercy, and dictated the humiliating treaty of Adrianople. This was quite in excess of the desires of the Western Powers, who sought the emancipation of the Hellenes, not the utter subjugation of the Turks; and the three Powers, represented by their plenipotentiaries in London, devised the singular expedient of offering a salve to the Sultan for the wounds inflicted by the Muscovite, in the shape of a contraction of the territory to be abstracted from Turkey, and constituted the Greek kingdom. As it was, they succeeded too well, and the most fertile portions of ancient Greece, if not those associated with the most illustrious historic names and incidents, remain a portion of the empire of the Porte to this day. But it was even

proposed to go further in this direction of Greek deprivation, and to limit the new state to the Morea and certain of the Greek isles. Against any such contracted frontier Palmerston warmly protested; thus expressing himself in his great speech on the foreign policy of the Wellington Administration, delivered on June 1st, 1829:—

“ Shall I be told that this purpose is accomplished—that the Morea and the Cyclades are to be this liberated Greece? and that the Isthmus of Corinth is to be its northern boundary? I say that will not be—that cannot be—it is impossible that it should be; a larger and wider limit, extending at least to the line drawn from Volo to Arta, is indispensably necessary for Greece. It is indispensably necessary for reasons which I shall not now go into, but reasons political, commercial, and military. Every man who has any local knowledge of the country, and whose judgment is worth having, agrees now, I believe, about this; be he English, or French, or Russian, or Greek; be he naval, or military, or diplomatic; and even those who were the greatest sticklers for the Morea simply, must now abandon the notion of establishing a Greece which should contain neither Athens, nor Thebes, nor Marathon, nor Salamis, nor Plataea, nor Thermopylae, nor Missalonghi; which should exclude from its boundaries all the most inspiring records of national achievements, whether in ancient or in modern times. But in this, as in clearing the Morea, France will hold the first and England the second place. The merit of giving this extended limit will, in public opinion, be ascribed to the enlightened liberality of France. France will have the credit of being supposed to have dragged England reluctantly after her; England will bear the odium of having vainly attempted to clog the progress of France. But why do not the allies deal with the country north of the isthmus, as they have done with that to the south, and occupy at once all that which must be assigned to Greece? I have seen that it has been said elsewhere that the allies are negotiating upon this subject with Turkey. I should have thought that the allies had had enough of negotiating with Turkey about Greece, and that they had by this time discovered that even Turkey herself would rather that on this subject they should dictate.”

We have already seen the important part which Mr. Canning played in arranging the affairs of Portugal and providing for its constitutional government. In January, 1828, the Princess Regent of that country resigned, and immediately after Don Miguel, who had been spending some time in England (it was hoped with the best political results), landed at Lisbon. He took the oaths to preserve the constitution, as the deputy of his brother and the protector of his niece. On the very next day he made a *coup d'état*. He appointed a most unconstitutional Ministry. The Liberals at once fled, and hired mobs paraded the capital, shouting for Miguel the First and the Queen-mother, with whose connivance the traitor and usurper acted. The time had arrived for the return to England of the troops sent out by Canning. Our ambassador, however, detained them, but the Ministry at once recalled them, on the ground that they were sent there to repel foreign aggression, and not to interfere in any way with the internal concerns of the kingdom.

Ere long Miguel proclaimed himself king; upon which the whole of the ambassadors save those of the congenial Governments of Spain and Rome, at once departed. The Liberals at Oporto formed a Junta, and raised the flag at once of legitimacy and constitutionalism. But they mismanaged their arrangements, and were compelled to seek refuge in England. The while, the child-queen, Donna Maria, was on her way from Brazil to occupy the Portuguese throne. Her conductors heard by the way of her uncle's usurpation, and conveyed her to England. She was received at Falmouth with royal honours. When the frigate which conveyed her arrived, her conductors were acutely and painfully uncertain whether she would be received as Duchess of Oporto or as a sovereign. "Everything hung now on a few moments. But all was well. The royal salute came thundering over the waters from the forts and the ships, and up went the flags on every hand. Then up went the royal standard of Portugal, and the young girl and her retinue knew that she was acknowledged queen by Great Britain." The English sovereign and the ministers paid the child every attention, but nevertheless it continued to be urged that we could not actively undertake her cause; that we were bound by treaty to Portugal to protect her against external, but not

internal, enemies of her liberty. We could neither depose nor impose her rulers.

In this policy of abstention Palmerston by no means concurred, and he more than hinted that Ministers in their hearts wished success to Miguel. On the 1st of June, 1829, Sir James Mackintosh brought forward a motion on the affairs of Portugal. From Lord Palmerston's long and most eloquent speech we extract these sentences:—

“The civilized world rings with execrations upon Miguel; and yet this destroyer of constitutional freedom, this breaker of solemn oaths, this faithless usurper, this enslaver of his country, this trampler upon public law, this violator of private rights, this attempter of the life of helpless and defenceless women, is, in the opinion of Europe, mainly indebted for the success which has hitherto attended him, to a belief industriously propagated by his partisans, and not sufficiently refuted by any acts of the British Government, that the cabinet of England look upon his usurpation with no unfriendly eye. In the opinion of many, this impression is confirmed by much which the Government have done, and by much which they have omitted to do. On the one hand, it is said that they have shown a great alacrity to back up his measures of war by their recognitions; and on the other, it is thought that they have displayed a very patient forbearance under indignities offered to England, in the persons of British residents in Portugal; while their steady refusal to interfere in cases in which their interference would have been prejudicial to Don Miguel, has been contrasted with their promptitude and vigour to interfere when their interference was subservient to his projects. All these things, it is said, seem to show that they look upon his conduct and political existence with very different eyes from the rest of mankind; and appear to countenance the supposition that they have attempted by negotiation to give a legitimate sanction and permanent existence to his usurpation; and have even contemplated the project of delivering up to the keeping and custody of a man who has attempted to imbrue his hands in a sister's blood—that infant queen—whose life is one barrier between him and the throne which he covets.”

A few days later, Palmerston selected even stronger expressions to convey his detestation of the foreign policy

of the Government. "It is impossible," said he, "for any man of late to have set foot beyond the shores of these islands, without observing with deep mortification a great and sudden change in the manner in which England is spoken of abroad; without finding, that instead of being looked up to as the patron, no less than the model, of constitutional freedom, as the refuge from persecution and the shield against oppression, her name is coupled by every tongue on the Continent with everything that is hostile to improvement and friendly to despotism, from the banks of the Tagus to the shores of the Bosphorus; and that she is represented as the key-stone of that arch of which Miguel, and Spain, and Austria, and Mahmoud are the component parts.

"Time was, and that but lately, when England was regarded by Europe as the friend of liberty and civilization, and therefore of happiness and prosperity, in every land; because it was thought that her rulers had the wisdom to discover that the selfish interests and political influence of England were best promoted by the extension of liberty and civilization. Now, on the contrary, the prevailing opinion is, that England thinks her advantage to lie in withholding from other countries that constitutional liberty which she herself enjoys. Not that they fancy that the rulers of England can be insensible to the blessings and the energy which spring from those popular institutions which they themselves are daily administering: if any man were to say so, he would not be credited; but they think that because our Government know the full value of these advantages, therefore, from political jealousy, they seek to retain the monopoly for England. It is thus that they imagine that the atrocities of Miguel in Portugal are redeemed in our eyes by his merit in destroying the constitution. It is thus that they suppose we are making Austria an instrument, while she fancies us her tool; it is thus that they see in the delay in executing the treaty of July, not so much fear of Turkish resistance, as invincible repugnance to Grecian freedom. I trust that when the time shall come when the Government shall feel itself at liberty to lay before Parliament the whole course of its negotiations, and to explain the tone, and the spirit, and the objects of its communications with foreign powers, all these unfavourable impressions

will be dispelled; and I rejoice that, through the present motion, such a development may be afforded, at least in the case of Portugal."

If hard hitting at Tories were considered a good qualification for junction with Whigs, it cannot be disputed that Lord Grey had inducement enough to offer Palmerston a seat in his cabinet.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE REFORM ADMINISTRATION.—PALMERSTON FOREIGN MINISTER.

A.D. 1830—1834.

IT forms no part of our plan to write a complete history of the doings and fortunes of the great Administration of Earl Grey. As it is, we shall find our canvas only too contracted for the presentation of even the most succinct account of those transactions proper to the business of his own department, which engaged Lord Palmerston during his first Foreign Secretaryship, which shed equal honour on himself and his country; and made the Holy Alliance an effete thing of the past in Europe. We must take for granted, therefore, an ordinary knowledge on the part of the reader of the circumstances which led to the resignation of the Tories after their quarter of a century's uninterrupted tenure of power, and the return of the Whigs for the first time since the dissolution of the Grenville Administration, which ensued upon the death of Charles James Fox. Lord Grey's Administration was a composite and coalition one, in which, however, the Whig element well preponderated. All the leading Canningites, save Mr. Huskisson, their chief, had ministerial offices, Goderich being Colonial, Melbourne Home, and Palmerston Foreign Secretaries; Charles Grant, President of the Board of Control; and Charles Wynne, Secretary at War. These gentlemen found themselves in the company of entirely new colleagues—Grey, Brougham, Durham, Holland, Althorp, Auckland, Russell, Graham, and Poulett Thompson. The only Whig member of the Government with whom Palmerston had hitherto acted as colleague—and that for a very brief period—was the Marquis of Lansdowne. The only real point of difference which had remained to distinguish the Canningites



from the Whigs was the question of Reform.<sup>77</sup> But Palmerston's mind had thoroughly ripened on this question. He gave his hearty support to the Government measure, speaking strongly, though infrequently, in its favour, in the successive exciting debates which preceded its triumph. When taunted with his change of opinion on this question, Lord Palmerston, with truthful and honest candour, thus rejoined:—

“The right honourable gentleman and gallant member has accused me of having changed my opinions on several great and important questions. I feel that those changes require on this occasion no defence or apology whatever. Indeed, they are now to myself the subject of joy and exultation, for I feel that my alteration of opinion has arisen from no other cause than from my having grown wiser as I grew older. It is well known to the House and to the public, that I have twice sacrificed office to my opinions. It may also be known to the right honourable and gallant gentleman, that it has also happened that I have declined office, when out of office, because I felt that I could not accept it and act on my own principles and my own convictions.”

It was on the 1st of March, 1831, that Lord John Russell first brought forward the Reform Bill. After seven nights' debate, leave was given to bring in the bill. Lord Palmerston spoke on the third night. We shall, with sufficient fulness and explicitness, represent his attitude and altered views on the subject, by presenting a brief summary of the arguments of this one speech.

He admitted, at starting, the difficulties of the question, and the great anxieties which attended its solution. Proneness to change had never characterized the English nation. On this very indisposition to change he based one of the chief arguments for the measure.

“So hard, indeed,” said he, “is it to bring this nation to consent to great and important changes, that some of those measures which impartial posterity will stamp with the mint-mark of purest wisdom and most unalloyed good, have only been wrung from the reluctant consent of England after long and toilsome years of protracted discussion.”

Such, for example, he specified as the Catholic claims and the abolition of the Slave Trade.

"When, then," continued he, "the public voice calls for change, when innovation is demanded, not by the bow-window orators and market-place politicians of the honourable member, but when the calm and steady voice of those whose property, intelligence, and station place them in a far different class, when the voice of such men calls loudly and constantly for change, it would be vain to attempt to persuade ourselves that there are not some real and practical evils which it is the duty of Parliament forthwith to endeavour to rectify."

He remarked upon the fact that Government, press, and public were all of the same opinion. "I contend that the people of this country seek for a change in the constitution of this House, and I need give no other proof of this than the fact that *we* are sitting here, and the honourable gentlemen opposite, on the benches which they now occupy."

The besetting sin of the late Administration was a defiance of public opinion,—“a belief that the firm and steady determination of a few men in power could bear down the opinions of the many, and stifle the feelings of mankind.”

This error had set Europe in flames, and plunged England in disorder. Partial tranquillity had been at home restored, but let none deceive himself that that tranquillity would be permanent if the legislature persisted in withholding the popular demand. If he were asked whence had this strong and united public opinion so suddenly sprung up, he would reply, “From the hotbed of electioneering corruptions.” Reform had been too long deferred. A moderate measure of disfranchisement would have sufficed three years previously, but no such compromise would be for a moment entertained by the people now.

“If, three years ago, advantage had been taken of the conviction of corrupt boroughs to bring gradually into connection with the House the great unrepresented towns; if, instead of drawing nice equations between the manufacturing and the agricultural interests, and with true algebraical accuracy bringing out a result of improvement just equal to nothing; if, instead of this, the Government had turned reformers, on ever so moderate a scale; if the Government had admitted the principle of amendment, and pledged themselves to act upon it whenever opportunities might occur, the House would not now

have been discussing a plan of general reform, proposed by my noble friend, as his Majesty's Paymaster of the Forces. I supported all those proposals for limited reform then, because I thought them good in themselves ; and because I clearly foresaw that, if they were refused, we should be obliged to have recourse to wider and more extensive changes ; and my predictions were condemned and disregarded by the honourable gentlemen opposite ; but they have been fully verified by the result. For reasons similar to those which induced me to then support those limited propositions of reform, I am now prepared to support the more extensive measure which has been proposed by my noble friend."

Other passages of the speech were addressed severally to the necessity of a large measure of reform ; the argument that the disfranchisement of close boroughs would not destroy the legitimate influence of the aristocracy ; the importance of local influence on the representatives, as secured by the measure ; and an argument of analogy drawn from the benefits of Catholic Emancipation. Passing by these divisions of the speech without further reference, we present in full the following passage—to us of a most valuable, because of an eminently autobiographical, character—in which Palmerston indicated the consistency of his two positions, as a disciple and representative of Canning and a broad electoral Reformer :—

"Taunts have been thrown out in the course of this night's debate against those who, like myself, were the admirers of Mr. Canning. We have been taunted for abandoning the principles which he supported with respect to the important question of Reform. Sir, I should have thought that events which have happened within these walls since the lamented death of that great and illustrious man, might have taught those from whom those taunts have proceeded an humbler and a juster estimate of the extent to which this sort of consistency ought to be carried. I should have thought that such men might have learned from examples, which they will be not less disposed than I am to respect, that public men may change their opinions upon questions of great public importance, without any other motive than an honourable, I will say, a noble regard for their country's good ; I should have thought these persons might have learned that it is not the duty of a public man in this

House to carry what I will call the private vanity of consistency of opinion to such an extent, as to sacrifice to it the interest and safety of his country.

"As to my own opinions, I have stated them. What the opinions of Mr. Canning would have been in the present day, had he been spared to the country, I will not take upon me to say; but they are bad expounders of the opinions of Mr. Canning who look only to the particular sentiments which he may have expressed in particular times, without fathoming the depth of the great principle by which the whole course of his public life was guided. If ever there was a man who took great and enlarged views of human affairs, that man was Mr. Canning,—if ever there was a man who, as it were, polarized his opinions by universal and all-pervading principles of action, that man was, undoubtedly, Mr. Canning; and when our assailants on this question would endeavour to pin down his gigantic mind by the Lilliputian threads of verbal quotation, I repudiate in his name the conclusions which they would draw; and I feel convinced that, if he had been standing here now, his mighty genius would have embraced within its comprehensive grasp, all the various necessities upon which our own conclusions have been founded, and that he would, in all probability, have stated to the House, with powers, alas, how different from those of any now within these walls! the same opinions which I venture humbly to submit. If any man wants a key to the opinions of Mr. Canning, let him consult the concluding passage of his speech on the 24th of February, 1826, as applicable to the present occasion as to that upon which it was delivered; in which he says, that 'they who resist improvement because it is innovation, may find themselves compelled to accept innovation when it has ceased to be improvement.'"

Lord Palmerston's altered views on the Reform question cost him his seat for the University of Cambridge. He fell back upon the close borough, Bletchingley, which had been his first seat. At the general election in 1832 he was returned for South Hants, from which, however, he was ousted in 1834, sharing the general unpopularity of the Whigs which followed so closely upon the national Reform fervour. He soon after was returned for Tiverton, which borough he has ever after continued to represent.

He stood unsuccessfully for Liverpool in 1841, without, however, relinquishing his reserved hold of Tiverton.

Palmerston remained a member of the Whig Cabinet until the retirement of Lord Grey, and he continued as Foreign Secretary during the short remainder of the Government's existence, under the leadership of Lord Melbourne. He is not recorded as having taken any part in the bickerings and dissensions which prevailed between certain of his colleagues in the latter portion of the Cabinet's existence. He sided neither with Durham nor Brougham in the unseemly squabble which the latter provoked at Edinburgh; and as for his views on the Irish Church revenues appropriation scheme, which caused the Duke of Richmond, Graham, and Stanley to leave the Cabinet, all we know is that Palmerston remained behind the seceders,—in office.

Not only is his name entirely absent from any contemporary records of internal differences, but it is also hardly to be discovered in the pages of Hansard, which are contemporaneous with the existence of the Reform ministry, in connection with any subject, except those of his own office. Even on Reform he only spoke once or twice, and, what is much more surprising, on the emancipation of the slaves he never spoke at all, if we except a passing eulogy on the working of the measure a twelve-month after it had been passed, accidentally dovetailed into a speech on a different subject. He uttered not a word on any of the great works of educational and legal reform, which remain the standing monuments of Grey's liberality and Brougham's wondrous fertility and industry.

Tithes, the Coercion Bill, and the Poor Law, were all debated without Palmerston's interference. The only domestic questions which form an exception to this general rule of abstinence, are those connected with the Corn Laws, for the abolition of which a considerable party had already been formed, and with the exclusion of Dissenters from the privileges of the universities. On both these questions he proved himself thoroughly sound, and that long in advance of many tardier converts, who have, nevertheless, continued in more recent days to have their names identified with these now popular cries in much closer association than that of Lord Palmerston. So early as 1833, he thus pronounced his opinion of the Corn

laws:—"The corn law is not so advantageous to the agricultural interest as the members of that body are led to believe it is. My interest is bound up with the prosperity of agriculture, and, speaking as an agriculturist, I have no hesitation in saying I do not think that what is called the protective system is so indispensable to the welfare of the landed interest as they suppose it to be. That is the opinion of my noble friend and myself; but I defy any man fairly to draw from the expression of that opinion the conclusion that we are prepared to effect a change in the existing system. I am further prepared to state that I do not concur in many of the arguments by which, generally, the system of protection is defended. I do not, for instance, perceive the force of the argument, that it will be dangerous for this country to depend on foreign countries for the supply of food. A great portion of the population of a manufacturing country must depend upon foreign countries for the means of subsistence; for if the foreign market be cut off, the manufacturers will be deprived of the commodities or money which they receive in exchange for the produce of their labour."

As an advocate for the abolition of religious tests in the universities, Palmerston was equally indefatigable, while he retained his seat for the University of Cambridge, and after he lost that distinguished position as the punishment of his turning reformer.

Taking his stand deliberately on the high ground of justice and right, he also, on more than one occasion, brought telling illustration and anecdote to his service. The following incident, given on his authority in the House of Commons, must have produced, or at least might have produced, a considerable impression even upon the most bigoted of his fellow-members:—"These titles [university degrees] have a real value with regard to the future prospects in professional life. We all know that, with regard to the learned professions of physic and law, to which many members of the university devote themselves, a degree is an essential help to future advancement. I remember having heard within the very walls of the university, in the hall of Trinity College, a striking illustration of the value of a university degree. The late Lord Erskine, with that forcible and impassioned eloquence with which he adorned the most trifling cir-

cumstance upon which he touched, was explaining how he ascribed all his professional success to the fact of his having obtained a degree at Cambridge. He said that, having taken to the law somewhat later in life than usual, and feeling dispirited and disheartened by the long probation through which he should have to pass, he was about to renounce the profession in disgust, when it was suggested to him that if he went down to Cambridge, and took out the degree to which his previous studies had entitled him, it would greatly shorten his period of probation, and be of essential service to him in other respects. He went down and took his degree—he was encouraged to persevere—and he mainly attributed to that degree the distinguished eminence which he afterwards attained. If Lord Erskine had happened to be a dissenter, the English bar would have lost one of its brightest ornaments. This, then, is unquestionably a great grievance towards the dissenters, that they should not be permitted to take degrees; but it is a still more severe hardship as far as the public are concerned, because it checks the supply of persons qualified to discharge those functions to which they are called, to the service of the community. But the injury to the dissenter can be measured, as far as it is possible to measure the sufferings of a wounded spirit, irritated by undeserved mortification. The injury to the public cannot be measured, because we cannot know the amount of talent diverted from its proper application, and of genius quenched without being allowed to shine in its natural career."

Sir Archibald Alison thus introduces Lord Palmerston to his readers, in his picture gallery of the members of the Grey Cabinet, in his "History of Europe from 1815 to 1852:"—

"If there is any British statesman of his age who has acquired a European reputation, it may safely be pronounced to be Lord Palmerston, whose name will be for ever associated with the great change in our foreign policy, and the substitution of Liberal for Conservative alliances. Foreign nations, not aware of the vital change which the Reform Bill made in our government, ascribe this change chiefly, if not entirely, to his individual influence, and according as their statesmen and historians belong to the democratic or monarchical party, he is the

object either of vehement laudation or of impassioned hatred. In truth, however, he is not the fit object of the praise he has received, or the vituperation with which he has been encountered. In a despotic country, a minister may impress his own principles upon the measures of Government; in a constitutional one he must receive it from the legislature. The Reform Bill having vested the government of England in the class of urban shopkeepers, the majority of whom are imbued with liberal principles, the carrying out of their wishes into our foreign policy became a matter of necessity, to which every minister, however otherwise inclined, must bend."

It is hardly necessary to state that the object we have in presenting this passage from the work of the very prince of blunderers amongst historians, whether ancient or modern, is anything but the indication of concurrence with its statements. But the chief allegation made by Alison has been uttered, or sanctioned, in some respectable quarters, and therefore it becomes the initial duty of a biographer, in commencing the narration of that best and ripest portion of Lord Palmerston's life, during which he was responsible for the foreign policy of Great Britain, to disprove the charge that the universally-admitted liberality of that policy was forced on him by circumstances, by the enthusiasm of the people, the increase of their power, and their augmented interest in the progress of liberty on the Continent.

While the latter facts must be admitted, it must equally be allowed that Palmerston—in that continuous and consistent course of liberal foreign policy which was addressed by him to the great ends of freedom, at one time in Greece, at another in Belgium, now in that peninsula where Wellington won his laurels, and again in that of which her Roman capital has been at once the glory and the bane—that in these and such instances Palmerston was rather the fugleman and inspirer of the sympathetic enthusiasm of the English people, than the mere inert, plastic (and, as Alison more than insinuates, reluctant) minister of their will.

Even on Sir Archibald's own plea, it rests with him to explain how it was that the foreign secretariat of Palmerston during the many months, running from 1830 into 1832, while the Reform Bill was pending and unpassed,



and ere the dreary historiographer's "urban shopkeepers" had had "vested in them the government of England," was quite as liberal, quite as productive of benefit to Portugal, Greece, and Belgium, as it was after the passage of the Reform Bill subjected the Ministry to that popular pressure which, according to Alison's theory—and not Palmerston's spontaneous and uncontrolled desire—was the real efficient cause of the liberalization of our foreign policy.

The truth is, that Palmerston's policy was not only quite as liberal ere the Reform Bill passed as after it became law, but he had imbibed and propounded on fit occasions quite as liberal views when Canning was Foreign Secretary as when he himself held his old master's post.

The true distinction, at once essential and historical, between our foreign policy in previous days and that which is peculiarly associated with the name of Palmerston, is not, as Alison has it, a distinction between the policies of the ante-Reform Bill and the post-Reform Bill periods.

Canning's policy, which preceded Wellington's, was quite as liberal by contrast with it as Palmerston's was, which succeeded it. Canning and his disciple Palmerston were, from 1822, quite prepared to go all the length which Palmerston actually ventured on in the year subsequent to 1830.

They did not do so then, for the simple reason that they could not.

Canning, cheered and sustained as he was by the public voice, had not nearly so strong a grasp of parliamentary and popular support as Palmerston and his colleagues had in the post-Georgian epoch.

Above all, the Holy Alliance, which was potent and martial in Canning's time, was, after 1830, cowed, or at least checkmated, by other combinations. And these combinations were mainly of Palmerston's making.

Lastly, Palmerston had this great and crowning advantage over his master, one quite adequate to explain the altered and bettered resulting phenomenon without any necessity for dragging in Alison's "urban shopkeepers" theory, a petty *deus ex machina*. He had the alliance, where Canning had had the determinate opposition of France.

In Canning's time France was ruled by Jesuits and the parasites of a weak king—a would-be tyrant. She was bound body and soul to the Holy Alliance. She was, indeed, the sword of that compact, the fighting vanguard of the others, who, while they supported her by their influence, and would have further done so by their arms if necessary, left her to crush out the embers of Spanish liberalism single-handed.

During Palmerston's Foreign Secretaryship France was for the first time for centuries really, and to all appearances, permanently free. The principles, objects, and sympathies of the government of the Orleanist elect of the French people were in the most thorough accord and unanimity with those of the popular English administration.

Palmerston took the fullest advantage of this happy circumstance, and applied the new and unwonted alliance of two peoples that had warred against each other for centuries, to the best and highest interests of general humanity.

Such considerations as these, and neither the popular pressure nor the ridiculous "urban shopkeeper" hypothesis of Alison, contain the real explanation of the fact that Palmerston effected so much by his foreign policy, in contrast with the half success and half failure of similar liberalism applied to our foreign relations by preceding ministers situate under much less favouring circumstances.

At the termination of the first term of Lord Palmerston's tenure of the office of Foreign Secretary, he more than once indicated that if there were one thing more than another, next to the preservation of the general peace of Europe by the Grey and Melbourne administration, which he deemed on a fair retrospect the crowning credit of his ministerial conduct, it was the establishment of a firm and friendly, and, as he hoped, lasting alliance between England and France.

And this was, indeed, a matter to take credit for. For during the whole of Palmerston's existence subsequently to his first occupancy of the Foreign Office, in spite of certain transient differences and misunderstandings, France and England have remained firmer allies than, to

say the very least, any other two great powers of Europe or the world.

When Palmerston returned to office, after the brief interregnum between Lord Melbourne's first and second administrations, he expressed in the highest terms his gratification, not only at the success of his own overtures of friendship and alliance to France, but at the fact that Sir Robert Peel had, during his premiership, taken up and recognized the policy as a legacy from the one government to the other.

"The right honourable baronet," he said, "has this night expressed sentiments which did honour to him individually, and which I am glad to find held by a person who has filled the highest office in the State, and who peradventure may be called upon to do so again. It is satisfactory to find that, however parties in this House may differ upon questions either of domestic or foreign policy, there are some points at least upon which both parties are disposed to agree. I am glad to hear the right honourable baronet express his satisfaction at learning that there continues to be an intimate alliance and union between this country and France. I was glad to hear the right honourable baronet say that the maintenance of that union must greatly contribute to the preservation of peace. I was glad to hear the right honourable baronet say that he looked forward to an enlargement of the commercial intercourse between the two countries as a pledge of the maintenance of that union, and as a means of making it more firm. I was glad to hear those sentiments coming from the right honourable baronet, and I rejoice that those sentiments were cheered by the gentlemen who sat around the right honourable baronet, because it has fallen to my lot to express similar sentiments in this House, which were received by the gentlemen opposite with a cheer of a different character, and conveying a meaning of a very different description from that which I have heard from him this evening. It has fallen to my lot to be taunted by the honourable gentlemen opposite when I expressed my sense of the value of the alliance between France and England. I was told that I was sacrificing the interests of England for the sake of French alliance, that the Government ought to pursue an independent system of national policy, and not to abandon the interests of

England in deference to the Government of any foreign power. The right honourable baronet, however, has given expression to juster sentiments. In those sentiments I cordially concur, and I hail it as a good omen to the policy of this country that it should be known to foreign nations that whatever changes may take place in the Government of England, whatever party may be destined to hold the reins of Government, no change is likely to take place in those fundamental principles of foreign policy by which the ancient hostility which too long subsisted between this country and France is now converted into a friendship destined, as I believe, to be lasting and secure."

Lord Palmerston may almost be said to have created the kingdom of Belgium. Ere the resignation of the Duke of Wellington, when the King of Holland, appealing to the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna, applied to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen, for armed assistance against his rebellious Belgic subjects, that minister had distinctly refused. But the great powers were not yet favourable to a complete severance of the two provinces. They were still compressed and hampered by the bonds of the Treaty of Vienna.

Palmerston inherited Canning's strong objections to very many of the provisions, indeed to the radical principles of that treaty, and its clauses constituted no difficulties for him. He saw from the first that a permanent union between Holland and Belgium was impossible. Belgium, which for centuries had been subject by turns to France, Spain, and Germany, contained a mixture of these and the Flemish races, no one of which had the slightest affinity with their common Dutch masters. The contagion of the Paris revolution of 1830 at once spread over the territory lying between Normandy and the Scheldt. A performance of "*Massaniello*" at Brussels was the spark that lighted the inflammable tinder. An *émeute* at once took place, and spite of certain too tardy concessions by the king, the capital was soon in the hands of the insurgents. A large army sent to reduce them to obedience was repulsed, and a few days afterwards Belgian independence was declared.

The National Assembly resolved to erect a monarchy instead of a republic. The crown was offered to the Duc de Nemours, one of Louis Philippe's sons; but Palmer-

ston and the other representatives at the conference which assembled to consider the Belgian question, at once objected to a measure of dynastic aggrandisement by the Orleans family, and, thanks chiefly to Palmerston's management, the crown was ultimately offered to and accepted by Leopold of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, a prince closely connected with and warmly attached to England. He married a daughter of Louis Philippe, which served as an extremely felicitous atonement for any chagrin or more serious disappointment that may have been caused by the exclusion of the Orleanist prince. All the great powers, save Russia and Prussia, at once recognized and guaranteed the new kingdom, and ere long they also added their adhesion. Peace was restored between the Dutch and the Belgians. Certainly, the extremely prosperous fortunes enjoyed ever since, by this energetic, industrious, thickly populated and admirably governed state, are no mean monument of the handiwork of Palmerston and his less prominent coadjutors in effecting this happy result.

Lord Palmerston thus reviewed his policy on the matter, and the principles on which it was based :—

“ From that moment [of the refusal of Lord Aberdeen to give the King of Holland armed assistance] the course of the conference was chalked out, and the only question which remained was, whether the two countries should be joined under one crown, in the same way as England and Scotland were before the Union, or whether it should be a complete separation, with two sovereigns, as well as two countries. But events occurred which completely decided that question. The unfortunate expedition of the King of Holland against Brussels, and the events at Antwerp, raised the passions and hostility of the people in Belgium, and from that moment it became impossible to place the two countries under the same crown. Well, then, I say, that from the moment it became obvious that the union of the two countries could not, with the free-will of both, be effected, and that their separation, therefore, was a matter of absolute necessity, it became the policy of England, if she looked not merely to her own interests, but to the arrangement which would best secure the peace of Europe, to constitute Belgium substantially and really an independent state; and at the same time to care that the interests of

Holland were not sacrificed. It is the policy, and, I may say, the duty of this country, not to become a party to any arrangement that would sacrifice or be injurious to the interest of Holland."

In one of the many parliamentary debates on the Belgian question, an amusing passage of arms took place between Lord Palmerston and Mr. Croker, an old colleague of his in his Tory days, and with whom he still lived on terms of friendship, but who was the most venomous sharpshooter of Sir Robert Peel's forces, and probably the most inveterate hater of Whiggism and Reform in England. Mr. Croker, on Lord Althorp's moving (August 12, 1831), that the House should go into committee on the Reform Bill, got up and sharply criticised certain proceedings of Lord Palmerston in the negotiations about Belgium, especially charging him with keeping back important documents, not only from the House but from the conference. As a specimen of Palmerston's lighter tone of good-natured raillery at this epoch of his life, we present a few sentences of his lively rejoinder:—

"The right honourable gentleman did what in him lay, by provocation, accusation, and, what is worse, exculpation—for I can forgive him anything sooner than his entering into a defence of my conduct—to draw me into a discussion of the whole question. Now, instead of entering into those details, and those arguments and explanations which must necessarily recall the whole of these transactions, which I have already told the House that, as a minister of the Crown, I think it my duty not to do, I will repeat that it is not my intention to depart from the decision I have already come to; and, in my opinion, the right honourable gentleman might have acted with greater advantage to the interests of the country if he had abstained from introducing the subject. But it seems that, in the absence of the principal performers, he has been to-night allowed a whole benefit to himself. He has given us a display, part tragedy, part comedy, and part tragic-comedy, and I wish I could encourage him by stating that he sustained each portion with equal success. Everybody knows that he is an exceedingly happy joker—happy sometimes in his self-satisfaction—and while he confines himself to the light and comic strain, he makes himself

agreeable to everybody; but he must not attempt too much versatility; he may be a good statesman of all work, but I assure him that he is not a good actor of all work, and in his attempts at the heroic he is apt to confound pathos with bathos, and to overleap the narrow bounds between the sublime and the ridiculous. I recommend him, therefore, in future, if he wishes to preserve his reputation, to observe the rules laid down in some of his earlier and fugitive productions in the dramatic art, to cease to vex the grander passions of the soul—

‘To leave high tragedy and stick to farce;’

he will thus yet afford much amusement; if it be not very natural, it will at least be very entertaining.”

It would appear that the latter allusions of this passage had specific reference to a certain co-partnership of a literary and satirical character, which in previous years had existed between Croker and Palmerston. For though the latter did not make it so appear in his jocular allusions to certain squibs which had been attributed to the pen of the Tory subordinate officer and political scribe, Croker, in his reply, took care thus to rectify the omission. The age is not without its value, either to the biographer of Palmerston, or to the reader who has lived contemporary with him only in his later years. “His noble friend had said that he (Lord Palmerston) did not write in newspapers. Such an observation from his noble friend was to him (Mr. Croker) a little surprising, if it meant to imply that, in the moment of relaxation from official business, he would not condescend to employ himself in such an occupation as that; and, indeed, the noble lord’s friends around him cheered the statement with a vociferation which appeared to imply that the occupation itself was in some degree a degrading one. Now, what he was about to say, he could assure his noble friend he would say in perfect good humour. He would say that if that cheer meant to insinuate that those who wrote for newspapers pursued a degrading occupation (Lord Palmerston nodded dissent), his noble friend signified that he did not share that opinion, and he should therefore not say what he was about to utter. He might be allowed, however, to observe, in reference to this topic, that if any person should here-

after collect those fugitive pieces which had been attributed to him (Mr. Croker)—with what justice the House would be presently able to judge—he repeated, that if such a collection should be made, and that the merit of those pieces should continue to be attributed to him, he should feel it his duty to do justice to his noble friend, by declaring that some of the best and most remarkable amongst them were his (Lord Palmerston's) own. He remembered well the days which he spent with his noble friend, not certainly in business of the grave importance which now occupied his noble friend's time, but in lighter and more agreeable occupations. He recalled with pleasure these earlier days, in which they pursued and enjoyed, not indeed the 'search of deep philosophy,' that the poet delighted to remember, but—

‘Wit, eloquence, and poesy;  
Arts which I loved, for they, my friend, were thine.’

This was extremely cleverly and aptly put, and there was a certain ingenious and piquant keenness in it, for these early squibs, the joint authorship of which Croker categorically attributed to Palmerston, were all addressed against the party, and in some cases against the men, with whom Palmerston now sat as colleague. Spite of this sharp encounter between those old allies and fellow officials in Tory cabinets, the combatants shook hands ere they left the ring. When Mr. Croker sat down, Palmerston at once rose and “assured his right honourable friend that, when they had thrown away their foils, and had concluded this discussion, the reciprocal thrusts which they might have given each other in the debate would not leave a wound behind.” And thus ended this Homeric episode.

The contagion of the French Revolution reached Poland as well as Belgium. The Archduke Constantine had inflicted upon that much-enduring nation the most horrid tortures. In November of 1830 a rising took place in Warsaw, in consequence of the flogging and imprisonment of certain youths, students of the military academy, who had drunk to the memory of Kosciusko. Ere long the Russian garrison were expelled. It was deemed possible that the Emperor might disavow the acts of the Archduke, and under that hope a petition was presented



to him for redress of grievances. The imperial answer was the despatch of an enormous army to avenge the "horrid treason" of the Poles; and ere the end of the succeeding year, after the most horrible atrocities, the bulletin—"Order reigns in Warsaw," was communicated to the appalled and sickened civilized communities of Christendom. For a time the insurgency was kept up beyond the walls of the fortified places, in the swamps and inaccessible recesses with which Poland abounds. But no wished-for armed assistance came from abroad; and Austria and Prussia looked coldly on as Nicholas pushed his work of fiendish vengeance. At last he fairly trampled out the revolution. The unslain heroes were sent to the Siberian mines, noble ladies were married by force to brutal Muscovite common soldiers, infants too young to know anything of their nativity or its locality were transported to Russia to be Russianized; the universities were closed, the constitution abrogated, and the very use of the Polish language prohibited. Western Europe, the while, gave sympathy and consolation, and large pecuniary contributions for the aid of the suffering Polish exiles were raised in England.

The Treaty of Vienna gave to England and France a perfect and incontestable right to interfere by force of arms in defence of Poland, if they thought fit. It has been stated, but upon authority which, although respectable, cannot as yet be accepted without further confirmation, that the Government of Louis Philippe urged upon that of William IV. the joint undertaking of warlike operations. It has also been alleged that Lord Grey, ere his death, acknowledged that the greatest error of his administration had been his refusal to act with France in behalf of Poland. And exactly the same incident is stated of Charles James Fox with regard to the first partition of Poland. It is impossible, in the absence of that full documentary evidence which, if it ever see the light at all, will probably not be made public for some years to come, to determine the truth of this allegation. The fact was, that neither France nor England, although both maintaining the right of interference, did do so otherwise than by remonstrance and diplomatic entreaty. Lord Palmerston, under the somewhat humiliating circumstances, endeavoured, to the utmost extent of his ability,

to befriend the Poles. He represented strongly to the Russian Government, and reiterated his opinion in the House, that the Czar had no right to abrogate the Polish constitution stipulated by the Treaty of Vienna if, on the ground alleged by him that the Poles had sacrificed all rights by their insurrection, and stood entirely *de novo*, in the position of a captured province. "I am not prepared," said he, "to admit that the revolt of a people—but be it remembered that the Russian Government always maintained in its proclamations that the revolt in Poland was partial and not participated in by the whole nation—will entitle a sovereign, after having re-established his authority, to abrogate their constitution. I should therefore say, that if the matter lay simply between Russia and Poland, and no other parties were concerned in the question, I do not think the Polish revolt (even after the Poles had taken the uncalled for, and, in my opinion, unjustifiable step of not merely asserting their rights, and claiming the maintenance of the privileges guaranteed them, but declaring the dethronement of the Emperor) justified the Russian Government in abrogating the constitution, after the authority of the Emperor was restored. In this case, however, there are other parties concerned besides Russia and Poland." And then he went on to enunciate the doctrine that "the contracting parties to the Treaty of Vienna had a right to require that the constitution of Poland should not be touched."

Lord Palmerston took the somewhat high ground of defending the non-interference by arms by England in the Polish question, in consideration of good feeling to the Poles. This appears a paradox, but it must be acknowledged that the following sentences, delivered in June, 1833, state at least a feasible *prima facie* case. With their citation we conclude our reference to this theme, which is certainly one on which neither a lover of his country nor an admirer of Palmerston can feel any gratulation on account of either the nation or the statesman. "I cannot but think that the House, however they concur in the explanation of the meaning of the Treaty of Vienna contained in the resolution of my honourable and learned friend, and however they may lament the fate of Poland, will be of opinion, in a calm, deliberate, and dispassionate view of the then state, and, I may also say, the present state

of Europe, that it would not have been judicious for the British Government to have taken a step which must have led to a general war, in the hope and expectation of rescuing Poland from destruction. I repeat that a general war must have taken place if England had interfered by arms; because, on one side there were Russia, Austria, and Prussia entertaining one opinion, and, on the other, England and France were united in a different interpretation.

"Austria and Prussia were both in possession of Polish provinces, and both were interested, or believed themselves interested (which is much the same thing), in establishing the interpretation put by Russia on the treaty. And what was the state of the disposable army of these powers? Russia had an army in Poland, against which the Poles were scarcely able to make head. Austria had an army on the Austrian frontier of Poland, while Prussia had concentrated her forces on the Prussian frontier; and if the British Government had wished to make the fate of the Poles certain, and to involve them in a contest with forces so superior as to render resistance on their part for a week impossible, they had nothing to do but to declare that they would, by force of arms, compel Russia to maintain the constitution of Poland. I, therefore, think that the British Government has acted wisely and properly in reference to the interests of the Poles themselves, in contenting itself with the expression of its sentiments on the subject."

We gladly turn, as a pleasing contrast to the sad fate of Poland, from complicity in which we are not entirely free, to the much more creditable narrative of the final measures by which Palmerston secured, not only the independence, but the stability of Greece. Certainly, Greece did not turn out nearly such a credit to him as Belgium; but this was attributable rather to the respective raw materials operated on, than to any negligence or shortcomings on the part of Palmerston and the other diplomats, whose aim and object it was not only to make Greece free of the Turkish incubus, but also unfettered by Muscovite influence. The Greeks had been quarrelling amongst themselves ever since the Turks had left the Morea. They were advised to get a king, but, as in their *similar necessity in more recent days, they had consider-*

able difficulty in procuring one. And they were gradually getting into a sadly disorganized state. Their President was a disguised Russian agent. Leopold, ere he became King of the Belgians, had been recommended to the Greeks, and would in all probability have accepted their throne but for a letter which he received from their President, Capo d'Istrias, drawing a miserable picture of the state of the country.

D'Istrias was accused of interested motives in making this communication, it being attributed to reluctance to resign his office of President. But a very sad and sufficient confirmation of the truthfulness of his representations was furnished in a very short time, by his assassination at mid-day on the threshold of a church. Palmerston determined that an end should be at once put to this dangerous transitional condition. If his encouraging remarks in the House of Commons as to the prospects of the Hellenic kingdom read ludicrously by the light of the further experience of Greece which he acquired in succeeding years, he had at least the consolation of knowing that he had many participators at once in the error and the disappointment. In a debate on the Anglo-Greek loan, in 1832, he thus expressed himself on the paramount necessity of Greece having a regular Government, and of the hopes and anticipations which its ægis would realize. "The condition of Greece is that of a small country which has been the scene of barbarous and exterminating warfare; and yet you are surprised that it does not possess revenues sufficient to defray the expenses of the Government. It is unreasonable to expect it; but give to Greece a regular Government; restore to her the blessings of peace, which will enable her to carry on a lucrative and profitable commerce, and to cultivate the land which is now reduced to the state of a wilderness, and that country will soon possess ample means, not only of defraying the ordinary expenses of the State, but of paying off the loan.

"At present there are a great many Greeks possessing capital, who, in the now uncertain state of their country's affairs, either do not reside in Greece at all, or if they do, are afraid of investing their capital in any manner which could at all conduce to the prosperity of the country. I am convinced, however, that if a Government were esta-

blished in Greece, that would allow of the development of the powers of that country, it would, from the active habits of the people, or from the advantages of its geographical position, which afford it the means of supplying the wants of the neighbouring countries—it would, I say, become one of the most prosperous states of its size in the world; indeed, I see no reason why we should not expect to see Greece attain the same degree of commercial prosperity which was, in former times, enjoyed by Venice and Genoa. This country, so far from having to regret, hereafter, that she gave the assistance of her name and credit (for I venture to say we shall not be called upon to pay a single shilling), in order to set this new kingdom on her legs, will look back to the part which she will have performed with the utmost pride and satisfaction.”

Lord Palmerston had the most sanguine hopes of Greek patriotism and virtue—much higher hopes than those entertained by his predecessor and successor at the Foreign Office, Lord Aberdeen.

Spite of the difficulties thrown in the way of a final settlement by the Czar Nicholas, Palmerston had the gratification of seeing his proposed northern boundaries of the kingdom of Greece, the gulfs of Volo and Arta, determined upon. This, however, cost the Greeks a payment of half a million to the Porte, and the credit of the three Powers, France, Russia, and England, was pledged for three millions more.

The failure of Grecian independence was completed when Otho, the youngest son of the King of Bavaria, an enthusiastic lover of Greek art, was placed on the throne at Athens, and inaugurated as monarch under the protection of his father's troops.

When Don Pedro, the Emperor of Brazil, who had elected that imperial crown in preference to the royal one of Portugal, learned how his infant daughter had been defrauded of her right by his brother and her uncle, he at once abdicated in favour of his son, and hastened to Europe to maintain his daughter's claims against his perjured and usurping brother. The English people loudly proclaimed their sympathies and their hopes for the success of his righteous enterprise. Palmerston and the Government warmly encouraged this direction of the popular feeling.

An exactly similar condition of affairs existed in the neighbouring country of the Iberian peninsula, and the attitude which Palmerston and his colleagues assumed with regard to Spain, was precisely identical with that held to Portugal.

Ferdinand VII. of Spain died of an apoplectic fit in September, 1833. Before his death he had assembled the Cortes to recognize his daughter's title to the succession, and to do homage to their future sovereign, and to enact the regency of his consort.

But the breath was hardly out of his body ere his brother, Don Carlos, took the field as a claimant for the crown, taking precisely the same part as Miguel was pursuing in Portugal. The English Government (spite of its non-intercession professions), acting in concert with France, warmly supported the joint constitutional causes in Spain and Portugal against the two avuncular pretenders. An English officer was permitted to take the command of Don Pedro's fleet; the Foreign Enlistment Act was suspended, and English soldiers were openly recruited for the armies of the Queens Donna Maria and Christina; the latter under the command of the gallant and illustrious De Lacy Evans.

This course of action was frequently assailed in Parliament, and as frequently defended by Lord Palmerston by such arguments as those contained in these sentences:—"The principle of embarking in the contests of other countries has prevailed and been acted upon in the brightest periods of our history. It is unnecessary to remind the House of the active part which was taken in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by English subjects, in the contests then carried on in the Low Countries.

"It is equally unnecessary to remind the House of the enlistment of a large body of men, in the reign of James I., to serve upon the Continent, and of the still larger body which went out in the reign of Charles I.—and in both cases the levies were by express permission of the Government of this country—to serve in the armies of Gustavus Adolphus. In short, in every war which has taken place in Europe, British subjects have, to a greater or less extent, served on that side whose cause was most congenial to their feelings, from the earliest period of our history down to the present time. But it has been

said, that where there is a law to prevent it, it is the duty of the Government to enforce that law, and to punish the offenders who disregard its provisions. I presume no one will deny that these two acts of the reign of George II. were in force at the period when the French Revolution broke out. At that period, Sir, there was an Irish Brigade serving under the King of France. Let us see what was the conduct of that brigade, and what was the conduct of the British Government. When the Republic was declared in France, that brigade quitted the service of the French King, and came over to this country; when, instead of inflicting upon these men the severe penalties authorized by law, his Majesty's Government formed out of them the regiments of Fitzjames, Conway, and O'Connell. By the strict letter of the law, be it remembered, they were liable to the punishment of death. But we are then told, Sir, that the Foreign Enlistment Act alters the case; and that, at all events, we have the power of issuing a proclamation to prevent individual subjects of his Majesty from entering into foreign service, or of recalling them if they have gone abroad. Now, Sir, the right honourable baronet read a proclamation which was issued in 1825, when Mr. Canning was in office, for the purpose of calling back subjects of his Majesty engaged in foreign service; but I would ask the right honourable baronet whether he does not know that it was perfectly futile and ineffectual, and that many British subjects continued to serve in the Greek army, after the issuing of that proclamation. In point of fact, it was a mere dead letter. . . . Lord Bathurst stated that it had been intimated to all officers on half-pay that they were not to embark in foreign service, but that they had persisted in doing so, utterly unmindful of the forfeiture of their half-pay, which was consequent upon their entering into the South American service. So the proclamations to our subjects in general, and to our officers on half-pay, have been equally and entirely ineffectual."

Mainly through Lord Palmerston's agency, a quadruple treaty was entered into between England and France, and the two Queens of Portugal and Spain, by which we pledged ourselves to establish with a naval force the power of their Governments throughout the Peninsula. *This treaty was proudly defended by Palmerston in the House of Commons as a compact of "constitutional*

powers," as an alliance against the enemies of England—for so, said he, ought Dons Carlos and Miguel eminently to be regarded; and as an effectual and final response to the pretensions and (to use Canning's highly significant phrase) the "areopagitical" doctrines of the Holy Alliance. Indeed, the Quadruple Treaty sealed the fate and sounded the knell of that unholy conspiracy.

About the same time as the plenipotentiaries who signed the Quadruple Treaty met at Madrid, the remaining partners of the Holy Alliance—Austria, Prussia, and Russia—were in session at Vienna. But how changed their condition and measure of their potency! The whole result of their deliberations was a mutual agreement between themselves to deliver up any disloyal and disaffected subjects of their respective crowns. How different this from the fell results of the congresses not a dozen years antecedently, of Troppau, Verona, and Laybach! And it must not be forgotten in how large degree this difference, so bright, benignant, and beneficial to humanity, was owing to the efforts of Canning, as the master and inaugurator, and of Palmerston, as the disciple and continuer.

The *amount* of difference between the two eras divided by so brief an interval, cannot be better displayed than by the quotation of these words uttered by Palmerston, when called upon to reconcile the abstention from interference in behalf of Spanish liberty in 1823, with the actual intervention of 1834:—

"The noble lord quotes also my opinions in the case of 1823, that it would be necessary, if we sent troops at all, to send a large army. But this, again, shows the extreme difference of the two cases; for in that war was it ten thousand or twelve thousand insurgents that were to be put down?—was it even one hundred and eighty thousand or two hundred thousand Frenchmen only, that we should have had to encounter? Does not the noble lord recollect that the French army on this occasion was the advanced guard of Europe; that the other great powers of the Continent then supported France; and that the contest into which we should have been led, if we had resolved to take the field, would have been, not with France alone, but with France leagued with the other military powers of Europe?"



If it serve no higher or better purpose, it will at all events be a certain relief and variety to the monotony of our relation of the leading points of the foreign policy of the Reform Administration, if we here introduce a portrait of Lord Palmerston as he appeared at this period of his career. It is far from a flattering presentment, nor do we attach much general value to the portrayal of the pen-and-ink portrait-painters of the gossiping school. Its author,\* it may be mentioned, has outlived the opinion of his youth, and has become, indeed, probably the most extravagant eulogist of Palmerston in existence. This one important truth may be learned from the passage quoted—that Palmerston had not by this time become a popular man, or a man of mark in England. His reputation was, and continued for many years after to be, much greater abroad than at home. Even amongst his colleagues of the Grey Administration, it is very clear, from more than one indication, that his weight and authority were very disproportionate to his genius and merits, which, it might fairly have been imagined, statesmen, if not the populace, ought to have apprehended and discovered.

"Of Lord Palmerston," wrote Mr. Grant, in 1836, "I have but little to say. The situation he fills in the Cabinet gives him a certain degree of prominence in the eyes of the country, which he certainly does not possess in Parliament. His talents are by no means of a high order. Assuredly they would never by their own native energy have raised him to the distinguished position in the counsels of his sovereign in which a variety of accidental circumstances have placed him. He is an indifferent speaker. I have sometimes seen him acquit himself, when addressing the House, in a very creditable manner; but he often stutters and stammers to a very unpleasant extent, and makes altogether an indifferent exhibition. His voice is clear and strong, but has a degree of harshness about it which makes it grate on the ear. He is very indolent. He is also very irregular in his attendance on his parliamentary duties; and when in the House, is by no means active in his defence either of his principles or his friends. Scarcely

\* *Grant's "Random Recollections of the House of Commons."*

anything calls him up except a regular attack upon himself, or in the way in which the department of the public service with which he is intrusted is administered.

"In person Lord Palmerston is tall and handsome. His face is round, and is of a darkish hue. His hair is black, and always exhibits proofs of the skill and attention of the *perruquier*. His clothes are in the extreme of fashion. He is very vain of his personal appearance, and is generally supposed to devote more of his time in sacrificing to the graces than is consistent with the duties of a person who has so much to do with the destinies of Europe. Hence it is that the *Times* newspaper has fastened upon him the *sobriquet* of Cupid."

## CHAPTER X.

TORY INTERREGNUM—MELBOURNE'S SECOND ADMINISTRATION—  
FIRST STAGE OF THE EASTERN QUESTION.

A.D. 1834—1837.

IN 1833 the Coercion Bill, which conferred extraordinary powers on the Irish Lord-Lieutenant, had been introduced as a Cabinet measure by Earl Grey's Government. By its provisions public meetings were prohibited, and martial law substituted for the jurisdiction of the civil tribunals. It was enacted for only one year, and the proposal to renew it for the next, with the exception of the martial law provision, caused not only considerable general unpopularity but certain dissensions in the Cabinet. These led successively to the resignations of Mr. Littleton, the Irish Secretary, and Lord Althorp. The latter was Lord Grey's most popular and highly esteemed colleague, and the Premier saw no other course open but to resign also. Lord Melbourne became Premier, spite of the general desire that Lord Althorp should be elevated to that distinguished position, which, however, he modestly declined, on the ground (and doubtless a true one) of insufficient capacity. Palmerston's position remained undisturbed by this re-construction of the Ministry. The Melbourne Cabinet lasted but a very few months. Lord Althorp, who had returned under Melbourne to his former position as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was elevated to the peerage by the death of his father, Earl Spencer, and necessarily forfeited a post which only a commoner can hold. The King seized the opportunity to give a *congé* to his Ministers. They retired in a body, as unregretted as their advent had been the subject of enthusiastic and turbulent acclaim. Their unpopularity arose from the general disappointment

at the abatement of their liberalism after the passing of the Reform Bill, and an unreasoning excitement, chiefly fomented by the *Times* newspaper, which had ratted to the Tory side, against the apparently harsh provisions of their Poor Law administration, but which has since been accepted as, on the whole, the most wise and beneficent result of the administration of the Reforming Whigs. The unpopularity of the Whigs had solely arisen from their domestic policy, with which, of course, Palmerston had no concern, save in the general respect of his joint responsibility for all the measures of the Cabinet of which he was a member. So far as the discharge of the duties of his department went, he contributed in no degree to the unpopularity of his colleagues.

The Duke of Wellington, when summoned by the King, counselled his Majesty to offer the Premiership to Peel. Sir Robert was at the time in Rome, whither he had repaired with Lady Peel to seek relaxation from his parliamentary duties. Thither a courier was at once dispatched with the royal commands. Sir Robert accepted the trust, and forthwith repaired to England to enter upon its exercise. Among the other appointments made was that of Wellington to the office vacated by Palmerston. Peel "went to the country," accepting, in his "Tamworth Manifesto," the Reform Bill as an accomplished fact, which he would not endeavour to disturb, considering it "a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question." Ministers did not succeed in having returned anything approaching a majority of Conservative members. It was clear that they would exist only on sufferance, and that the term of their tenure of office depended upon the willingness of the Whigs and the Radical members to unite in a general onslaught on the Treasury bench. After a conflict of extremely angry debates, and a succession of Ministerial defeats, Lord John Russell obtained a large anti-Ministerial majority on the question of the appropriation for general national purposes of a useful character of a portion of the revenues of the Irish Church. This was at once followed by the resignation of Peel. In the main, the *personnel* of the second administration of Lord Melbourne did not differ from that of his first. The names of Spencer (Althorp) and Brougham were the chief

omissions. Lord Durham, whose health did not permit of his sitting in the Cabinet, nevertheless identified himself with it by accepting the embassy to Russia. Palmerston had not uttered a word in the House of Commons during the short term of the administration of Peel. In fact, he had no occasion, for no single question of importance relating to his peculiar field was raised during the few weeks in which the Tories sat to the right of the Speaker. Lord Palmerston's return to the Foreign Office was not at once determined upon by Lord Melbourne. The secret history of the party intrigues of the time has not yet been, and possibly never may be, divulged. It would be needless, therefore, to speculate as to the reasons why it was that so old a colleague of Palmerston's as Melbourne was, and necessarily so well acquainted with the value of his precious services, should not have at once included Palmerston in his earliest arrangements. Were we to venture upon a conjectural cause, we should hazard the theory that Melbourne's hesitancy arose from a difference of opinion between Palmerston and his former colleagues about certain of the measures of extreme economy which they had thrown out as baits for Radical support. On one important occasion, at least, to which we shall have to refer in the immediate sequel, Palmerston's weight as Foreign Secretary was most miserably impaired by the fact of the reduction of our naval armaments to the lowest ebb. And it is by no means improbable that he protested in the Cabinet against so galling a circumstance. Be that as it may, it is alleged on excellent authority that Melbourne in 1835 offered the Foreign Office to Lord John Russell, and that it was only on his refusal, and indication of a preference for another post, that it was placed at Palmerston's disposal.

The grand key-note to the whole foreign policy of Lord Palmerston under Lord Melbourne's second premiership, lasting from 1835 to 1841, was, as one of his unfriendly critics correctly said, a "restless activity" directed to the sole end, of which he never lost sight, of preventing the accomplishment of the general designs of conquest entertained by Russia. These designs were mainly directed against the Turkish empire. Accordingly, Palmerston's policy took the antagonistic aspect of a protectorate for

Turkey; a protectorate not only from the blows which should fall from St. Petersburg and Sebastopol, but from the intestine strokes of disruption and disloyalty dealt by the Sultan's rebellious vassal, the Pacha of Egypt. It was against Russian aggrandisement too, as the ultimate ends of his procedure, that Palmerston interfered by force of arms in favour of the righteous successor to the throne of Persia, as he had done in the similar cases of Spain and Portugal; that he protested against the hostile invasion and the submersion of the liberties of the Republic of Cracow; that he ran even the great risk of the rupture of the French alliance, which he had created, and in which he took such just pride, when the Cabinet of Thiers (we write the words deliberately, spite of its plausible whitewashing by Guizot in his "Embassy to the Court of St. James's in 1840") played false to Christendom on the Eastern question. And it was the Russians, and not the Affghans, against whom the expedition of Sir Robert Sale into the wild fastnesses which separate Persia from Hindostan, was really directed.

Other, and important, matters had to be deliberated on and dealt with by Palmerston:—a misunderstanding with the kingdom of Naples; the conduct of France in blockading two thousand miles of Hispano-American coast; the painfully unsatisfactory result of the intervention of our brave legionaries in Spain and Portugal; disputes with America about the frontiers and the right of search; a number of treaties of commerce, and for the suppression of the slave trade. But the aggregate of these and other minor matters does not bulk so importantly as the policy directed against the daring and unscrupulous schemes of the youthful Czar Nicholas. To it accordingly we shall dedicate by far the larger portion of our attention in this division of our biography.

Mehemet Ali struck a blow at his sovereign, which enabled Russia to inflict a much heavier one. Mehemet was the Napoleon of the Moslem world. His character and career bear the most marvellous semblance to those of the great modern despot of Christendom. By a singular coincidence, both usurpers were born in the same year—1769, which contained the natal days of so many other illustrious men.

Born an Albanian peasant, he began life as the keeper

of a petty shop, and he could not read until he attained his thirty-fifth year. Having volunteered into the Turkish army, he early distinguished himself in the suppression of a rebellion in Candia. From this date his fortunes advanced with a rapidity more peculiar to Moslem than to Christian states. He co-operated with the British troops sent to Egypt to dislodge the French; and shortly after our evacuation of that country, at the head of the Mamelukes he overthrew a pacha, who had been nominated by the Porte, and assumed his vice-regal position. He was hardly elevated by these prætorian warriors, ere he determined to rid himself of their dangerous authority by a general massacre. He succeeded in this hazardous service, and set an example which his sovereign, Sultan Mahmoud, followed some years afterwards in the annihilation of the Janissaries. Having augmented his power by successive acts of rapacity,—by the extension of his authority to the important island of Candia, and to Upper Egypt; by his rout and subjection of the fanatical sect of the Wahabies, who had possessed themselves of the sacred Arabian cities, and by the effective service he rendered as generalissimo of the Ottomans against the insurgent Greeks, he resolved about 1830 to undertake a higher enterprise. He rose in revolt against his sovereign, and for ten years afterwards did more to promote the ends of Russia, and to furnish employment for the diplomatists, and alarm for the denizens of the central and western countries of Europe, than all other contemporaneous agencies united. Pretending that some runaway Egyptian malefactors had taken refuge in Syria, and to avenge the refusal of the pacha of that province of the Porte to surrender them, he crossed the desert, and soon reduced the whole of ancient Palestine and the country up to the confines of Asia Minor to subjection. Acre, Aleppo, and Damascus were in succession mastered by him. A brilliant victory opened to him the passes of the Taurus. He crossed from Syria into Caramania. Another sanguinary victory over the Turkish army under Reschid Pacha opened the way for him to Constantinople itself, and it seemed as if the fate of the old dynasty of the great Sultan Othman, Mahomet II., and Solyman, “the Lord of his Age,” had at last come. In his dire extremity, the Sultan besought England for succour. Palmerston had (thanks to the mistaken economy of the *Reform Ministry*) to make the humiliating confession that

we had no available fleet to send to his assistance. And, indeed, the anti-Turkish sentiments which had been evoked during the Greek struggle for independence were still so strong, and the apprehension of Russian ambition as yet so weak, that it must be doubted if the nation would have consented to undertake any warlike measures for the preservation of the Porte, even if our armaments had been so numerous and efficient as they were feeble and curtailed. Our refusal plunged Turkey into the dangerous embrace of Russia. She had no alternative but to implore the aid of the great Northern power against her rebellious vassal. This was promptly and jubilantly rendered. A Russian army was sent to protect Constantinople. Mehemet had no desire to meet so potent an adversary; and the march of his troops, under his son Ibrahim, was at once suspended. He, however, dictated his own terms to the Sultan. He retained possession of the whole of Syria. Nicholas, by the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, imposed his own terms upon the Porte as the price of the timely service he had rendered. The Sultan ceded to Russia an extensive territory at his north-eastern Asiatic frontier. He engaged to pay at the earliest possible date the balance of the indemnity still due under the Treaty of Adrianople. The free passage of the Dardanelles by Russian armed vessels was conceded; the value of this stipulation being enhanced by the circumstance that every other power was excluded from the privilege. Lastly, the important citadel of Silistria was to remain in the possession of Russia as a pledge for the fulfilment of the other conditions. This gave to Russia the effective command of Wallachia and Moldavia, and left the Turkish frontier perfectly defenceless. The treaty bound Turkey hand and foot to Russia. When the news of its ratification reached Western Europe, it was received with the utmost surprise and consternation. The popular indignation in England was evoked to an extent rare indeed in the case of a diplomatic arrangement between two powers to which we stood in a common relation of neutrality. But this sentiment was impotent, for all were forced to admit that the result had most naturally arisen from our refusal to assist Turkey in her extremity. Lord Palmerston determined to devote all his energies to the neutralization and overthrow of an arrangement which made the Czar



nearly as dominant in the city of Constantine as in the city of Peter the Great, with what alternations of disappointment and success the following pages will sufficiently show.

Palmerston gradually acquired the national and parliamentary support which was absolutely necessary to him in the new tone which circumstances compelled him to adopt to Russia. And one incident, in which the arrogance of Nicholas sought a higher altitude than it had yet attained, did very much to augment this fortunate concord between the policy of the Foreign Secretary and the responsive views of the nation at large. When the Whigs came into power in 1830, Lord Heytesbury was our ambassador at St. Petersburg. Lord Grey requested him to remain as our representative, though his politics were by no means coincident with those of the cabinet. Ill health, however, compelled him to retire two years later, when Sir Stratford Canning, a cousin of the great statesman, was appointed in his stead. That great public servant of England, who for so many years afterwards proved himself so fit a coadjutor of Palmerston in their joint purpose of restraining the pretensions and resisting the encroachments of Russia, was known to be a firm Liberal, and unusually well acquainted with the secrets of Russian intrigue. Nicholas insolently refused to receive him, and with proper defiant feeling the Whigs refused to appoint anybody else, holding that it was no right of any foreign potentate to dictate to the crown of England who should or who should not represent it at a foreign court. The short-enduring Government of Peel took a less high and dignified view; they filled up the post, appointing the Marquis of Londonderry, the brother of Lord Castlereagh, a notorious detester of everything savouring of liberty, and the professed inheritor of the worst of his brother's principles. Of course no appointment more pleasing to the Czar could have been made, and he graciously indicated his satisfaction. But the Commons of England revolted against this humiliation. Sheil brought forward the subject in the House of Commons, receiving for his strictures an amount of general support which showed how deeply the national heart was stirred. The Marquis relieved the Government from their difficult position by voluntarily throwing up his

nomination. It devolved again upon Lord Palmerston, upon his return to the Foreign Office, to fill up the vacancy; and he boldly selected Lord Durham, the most thoroughly popular of the Reform Bill heroes, and indeed the most Radical nobleman in England. This time, Nicholas did not deem it prudent to make any objection; and his acceptance of the appointment may be considered the first encouraging success gained by Palmerston in that long contest of his with Nicholas, which only ended with the death of the Czar, baffled and humbled by the successes of the allies in the Crimea. Nevertheless, a galling insult was in store for England in the person of her ambassador. France and England had vainly protested against the closing of the Dardanelles to all armed ships save those of Russia. Lord Durham determined to proceed to the seat of his embassy by the route of the Black Sea; and an ambassador to Persia, whom we were sending out about the same time, proceeded by the same route. Our Persian ambassador was refused permission to pass through the Straits, except in an unarmed vessel; and when Lord Durham reached the same classic locality, he was saluted by a Russian man-of-war, and had not a single gun on board the vessel in which he travelled with which to return the salute. When he approached Odessa, no shot was fired in honour of his presence, and the governor of the place, when remonstrated with, coolly replied that he could not be expected to imagine that an unarmed vessel had an ambassador on board! England did not at once seek to avenge these insults, but Palmerston treasured them against the general settlement, which a few years after ensued.

Several discussions on the subject of Russia in the House of Commons, in 1836, proved to the world that England was at length fully alive to the dangers of Muscovite aggression, and very considerably strengthened the hands of the Foreign Secretary. Let us record, to the honour of Peel, that on these occasions he forsook the ordinary temptations of party warfare, and warmly vindicated and supported the attitude of his political opponent. With equal dexterity and laudability, Palmerston, while proudly and gladly accepting the indications of national support against, and vigilant watchfulness of, the designs of Russia, demonstrated that a general pacific

tone in our dealings with foreign nations, was after all the most politic to observe in our intercourse with that power. "My noble friend (Lord Dudley Stuart), in his speech, has with great ability and research traced the progressive augmentation of territory which the Russian empire has acquired. If there is one subject more peculiar than another connected with these acquisitions, it is that they have been, almost invariably, made at periods when the other nations of Europe were engaged in quarrels among themselves, and their attention was occupied in their own respective wars. That being the case, my noble friend must approve of the policy we have observed in preserving the peace of Europe, because he must be convinced that it is a better way of preventing the further aggrandisement of that power, than that of pursuing the advice of the honourable member for Birmingham (Mr. Attwood)—to have a war either of gold or of paper. My noble friend must, upon reflection, be satisfied that the preservation of peace can alone prevent the recurrence of the events of former times—the evils which he has stated to the House. I say, this affords us an additional motive for endeavouring to avoid the causes of war, and to cement those alliances in peace by means of which we may prevent occurrences which might be followed by consequences which my noble friend so strongly deprecates. I agree with my noble friend, that it is of importance to this country, both commercially and politically, that Turkey should be maintained in integrity and independence; and individually, upon former occasions, I have endeavoured to satisfy the House that this is not only the opinion now entertained by his Majesty's Government, but one which has been constantly expressed upon those occasions when, according to custom, they have made communications to Parliament; and I can assure my noble friend that he does not feel more strongly than we do upon this subject. I believe that feeling is also shared with us by all other countries, whose interests, as well as ours, require that Turkey should continue independent and powerful."

Still another indignity were we to receive at the hands of Russia. The Polish city of Cracow had been erected in 1815 into an independent state, with its own municipal government. It had become the rendezvous of fugitive *politicians*. These persons occupied (or it was so alleged)

their leisure in the concoction of new schemes. Certain expressions used by some of these refugees on the saint day of the Emperor Nicholas reached his ear, and he determined upon vengeance. All liberal strangers were ordered to be expelled the city within eight days; and the three Powers took possession of the place which they had sworn to preserve from any foreign military occupancy. The same atrocious results followed as those which had been expressed in the declaration of a few years previously—"Order reigns in Warsaw."

Sir Stratford Canning brought the subject forward in the House of Commons, demanding inquiry and explanation from the Government. Messrs. Hume and O'Connell took part in the discussion, the latter vehemently denouncing "the land piracy of the crowned robbers," who had not only violated the neutrality and independence of Cracow, but had treated England and France with the grossest contumely. The feeling about Russia which now happily prevailed in England may be very correctly gathered from his concluding words:—"I trust that the period is not remote, when, with the assistance of France, we shall be able to demand not only the restoration of Poland to her former independent station in Europe, and the restoration of Finland to Sweden, from which it has been unjustly wrested, but also the compulsory retirement of Russia into those Asiatic limits out of which she ought never to have been allowed to advance!"

Lord Dudley Stuart took the same high tone:—"Even," said he, "if it could be proved—which he denied—that those powers had a right to make the demand which led to the occupation of Cracow, still the outrage and the insult on England were not the less. There was a want of the usual diplomatic courtesy in the mode in which that occupation was accomplished." This was in reply to Lord John Russell, who had given it as his opinion that the honour of Great Britain had not been involved in the transaction, who "thought high language an unwise thing," and "could not agree that it would be proper to come to any strong resolution on this question, even when they knew more about it than they did now, unless they were prepared to support it by means of force."

Palmerston, while reluctantly adopting a similar tone, nevertheless expressed, in the most uncompromising

manner, his opinion of the conduct of Russia. "As yet," he said, "no sufficient reason had been given, either for the entrance of the troops, or the shortness of the interval which had been allowed between the demand and the entrance which had been effected. He should, therefore, say that although it might be difficult to deny the right of the three Powers, under the circumstances assumed, to require the removal from Cracow of those persons who had been really engaged in the alleged correspondence, yet the demand made far exceeded any apparent ground of necessity; and that to require in such sweeping terms the expulsion of so many individuals, great numbers of whom were known to have settled in the place, contracted marriages, acquired property, and entered into the service of the State, was far beyond what could even possibly have been necessary for the safety of the adjoining states." He stated that an English consul should be sent to Cracow, but it was intimated by the rulers of the Cracovians, that no English consul would be permitted to enter the city. This further indignity had at least the good effect of fostering the salutary Russophobia in England.

Lord Palmerston has always been distinguished by his gallant and chivalrous bearing to the fair sex. He had a somewhat amusing opportunity of displaying it in the session of 1836. There was a rule in the House of Commons by which ladies were excluded from the debates; Mr. Grantley Berkeley moved that that order should be rescinded, and a select committee appointed to consider the best mode of accommodating the ladies. He argued that, as by the Constitution a female might wear the crown, there was no reason why females should not exercise political influence, and take an interest in political discussions. He quoted cases where ladies many years before had been admitted to the House, and referred to the practice as existing in the Irish Parliament, in the French Chambers, and in our House of Lords. He thought, too, that the character of the debates, which during the session had exhibited too many specimens of coarse personalities, would be improved by being carried on in the presence of a purer audience.

The tone of this eccentric person's speech was frivolous, if not insulting. There was quite a competition amongst *members* for the honour of seconding the motion. Others

of the representatives (Lord John Russell being one) looked upon the proposal with the greatest disfavour.

Sir John Cam Hobhouse thought that it was quite enough that ladies should gather their political knowledge from the newspapers, and that there should be at least one portion of society in which members might rest from political debate and contention. He thought there was something indecent in introducing high-bred and virtuous-minded females within the walls of Parliament, to listen to the multifarious debates which there took place.

Lord Palmerston, assuring the House that the question was not a Cabinet one, decidedly differed from his two colleagues. Unlike Mr. Berkeley, he adopted a serious and respectful tone, with no admixture of ribaldry. He could not think that any inconvenience could arise to their proceedings, or to the ladies themselves, by permitting their presence. "I am quite satisfied that whatever interest the novelty may produce on the first or second evening, it will soon wear off, and we shall pursue our avocations without thinking of the ladies' gallery at all; and we shall say, as an honourable member once said of another gallery, when he was told by a friend to speak louder, because he was not heard in the gallery: 'Really when one speaks, one forgets that there is such a thing as a gallery.' My honourable friend seems to think that the ladies could scarcely wish to take any interest in the discussions which take place, but I consider that they have naturally a great deal of interest in them."

The Speaker having been appealed to for an opinion on the proposal, pronounced one decidedly hostile; and it was rejected. In a subsequent year, when it was renewed in a more grave and decent manner, it was agreed to.

About this time there arose in England a party, which, if not numerous, was strong, vehement, and resolute; and if remarkably one-sided, singularly well-informed on the subject on which its opinions were expressed. This was the party of Mr. Urquhart, for some time the Secretary to the English Embassy at Constantinople, and whose antipathy to Russia, and intimate knowledge of her designs, led him to allege that Palmerston was neither sufficiently alive to the imminent danger, nor energetic enough in the measures of resistance which he was pre-

paring to meet it. He and his followers even went so far as to accuse him of sordid complicity in the Russian design, and to allege that he was the pensionary of the Czar.

The admirable temper and cool indifference with which Palmerston, throughout the period of the angriest rables of the Urquhartite fever, met his accusers is one of the finest characteristics of his career. One of the chief points of the Urquhartite programme was, the vital importance to England of the preservation of the independence of the inhabitants of the Caucasus, against whom Nicholas was carrying on a most malignant war of conquest or extermination. The right of Russia to the coast she claimed on the east of the Black Sea was far from clear. But Turkey, in her extremity, was not powerful enough to contest it. She was, indeed, daily suffering the most galling insults from the power which had acted as her deliverer only that it might enslave her. The Cabinet of St. Petersburg interfered in every particular of the foreign policy of the Divan. Russia even reproached Turkey for seeking to stand well with the English Government. When Turkey authorized us to establish a communication with India by the Euphrates, and issued a firman to Mehemet Ali, commanding him to lend his assistance to the enterprise, Russia threatened to withdraw her protectorate, and stated that if Mehemet's refusal to obey the firman of the Porte should expose him to hostilities from Great Britain, she could not remain a passive spectator, but must support the powerful vassal at all hazards.

About the same time she compelled the Sultan to impose upon his numerous Christian subjects of the Armenian faith an alien patriarch who was a Russian ecclesiastical dignitary, and, like thousands of other oriental ecclesiastics of all grades, a faithful emissary of the Czar. A Circassian prince, resident in Constantinople, was presented by the Sultan with a gold snuff-box as a mark of esteem: the Russian ambassador, on learning this, at once insolently reproached Mahmoud for having thus favoured an enemy of Russia and a friend of England. He demanded that the prince should be instantly expelled Constantinople, on pain of his taking down his flag and discontinuing diplomatic intercourse.

*The arrogance of Russia at this period may be judged*

from these passages from a proclamation issued by one of her generals to the Circassian warriors, against whom she was exasperated by her utter want of success.

"Are you not aware that if the heavens should fall, Russia could prop them up with her bayonets? The English may be good mechanics and artisans, but power dwells only with Russia. No country ever waged successful war against her. Russia is the most powerful of all nations. If you desire peace, you must be convinced that there are but two powers in existence—God in heaven and the Emperor upon earth."

The Circassian war at one time seemed certain to bring England into armed collision with Russia. An English vessel, the *Vixen*—the owner of which dexterously, but unsuccessfully, endeavoured to get Palmerston to sanction his enterprise ere it was entered upon—landed a cargo of salt upon the coast, at a port which had been recaptured by the Circassians. A Russian cruiser seized the *Vixen* on the plea that she had transgressed some customs regulation. A storm was raised in England by the Urquhartites, abetted by the journals opposed to Government. They demanded that reparation should be called for and enforced. The warfare was long and furiously waged, in the Houses of Parliament and outside their walls. Most people became at last convinced of what really appears to the now calm historic eye to have been the truth—that the whole affair was a plot of certain fanatical politicians to embroil the two countries. The general common sense sustained Palmerston in his refusal to make a distinct claim for the release of the *Vixen* on the part of the British Government. Mr. Urquhart, who had been the undoubted prime mover in the business, into which the King as an individual was managed by an astute move to be involved, was dismissed by Palmerston from his post. This, as can be easily imagined, did not at all tend to diminish the acerbity of the discarded diplomatist. He obtained a seat in Parliament, and the equally valuable advantage of access to the leading columns of the *Times*, from which two strong positions he long continued to bombard the Foreign Office, and with considerable effect; for it cannot be denied that Palmerston's popularity was about this period at a very low ebb. A band of paid lecturers in Mr. Urquhart's service traversed the



country to present half facts, to base on them distorted conclusions, and to indulge in sounding accusations ; and the very anti-Russian sentiments that had fallen from Palmerston's own lips were made to feed the popular feeling against him. The Ministry as a whole, too, had become extremely unpopular. The expectations entertained by the extreme section of the community, of the amount and the celerity of the succession of the measures of a democratic tendency which should succeed the Reform Bill, had been woefully disappointed. Ministers had a bare working majority in the Lower House ; in the Upper, they were, as always, enormously outnumbered. The Church was indignant at the alliance with O'Connell. The *Times* echoed that indignation, and daily thundered with enormous power, but with a mean and discreditable pandering to popular prejudices, against the alleged cruelties of the new poor-law. The Dissenters were alienated by the forfeiture of many promises. Mr. Spring Rice had proved a most unsatisfactory Chancellor of the Exchequer. In Palmerston's special field, the results of our once enthusiastically rendered armed assistance to the constitutional cause in Spain and Portugal had turned out most unsatisfactory. The laggard but cruel contest still went on. Carlos had still bands in the field, and considerable provinces acknowledging him as sovereign. Englishmen were saying that had they anticipated that the struggle would have assumed so serious and protracted a character, they would have hesitated ere incurring the responsibility of sharing in it. The feelings to which the contest gave rise were of a very painful and conflicting character ; for Englishmen were to be found fighting on the Carlist as well as the constitutional side. As may be easily imagined, Ministers were loudly exclaimed against on all hands. Some reproached them for having intermeddled at all. Others denounced their interference as partial, incomplete, and inefficient.

Palmerston fought gallantly against such of the anti-ministerial charges as were directed against their foreign policy. He concluded one of the most incisive and telling speeches he ever delivered by contrasting the Tory efforts to maintain the cause of despotism in Europe with the successful endeavours of the Government in the pursuit

of a more liberal and enlightened policy. "The former supported Don Miguel up to the last moment, and now gave their countenance to Don Carlos, who was the author of the assassination decree of Durango, and believed by all Europe to be intent on establishing the Inquisition as soon as he arrived at Madrid. The Ministers, on the other hand, might boast of the moral support they had given to the cause of national liberty in Spain; of the part they had taken in the emancipation of the Greeks; of the free constitutions of Belgium and Portugal, which had grown up under their auspices—and if he could contribute, however humbly, to the establishment of the same state of things in Spain as existed in Belgium and Portugal, he should esteem it a source of personal satisfaction to the latest hour of his life." And a few days later, with justifiable gratulation, he contrasted the general condition of peace which England and Europe had enjoyed since the advent of the Whigs to power with the general expectations of men universal at the time of their elevation:—"In 1830, was there one man belonging to the present Opposition who believed that peace could be maintained? Was there one man among them who expressed his opinion in public, who did not confidently state that peace could not be maintained by us for six months longer? This declaration was made not only in conversation across the table of this House; but on one occasion, when sitting beside an honourable member on the same bench, was I not warned in these deliberate and prophetic words:—"If an angel were to come down from heaven to write your despatches, even that interposition would not prevent you from having a war within the next six months?' Now, no angel has come down from heaven to write our despatches, and yet we have succeeded in maintaining peace, not for six months, but for six years from that day.

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"But did we, even at that period, ever express a thought of this kind? did we ever proclaim that war was inevitable? We said the exact contrary, and pledged ourselves to maintain peace. That pledge we have redeemed; and I do say, that when we consider the calamities which war

brings in its train, destroying the fruits of industry, retarding improvement, and turning back as it were the tide of civilization, the House must feel that those materially contribute to the happiness of the world, who, in the present discharge of their duty, have averted such a disastrous state of things—that their labour has not been fruitless who have toiled in so good a cause.”

Spite of the many achievements performed by Palmerston as Foreign Secretary, and of the admirable and gallant defence he made of them when assailed, he shared to the full in the general unpopularity of Ministers at that stage of our narrative at which we have now arrived—the termination of the second year of the second administration of Melbourne, and the period of the death of King William and accession of Queen Victoria. Perhaps we can by no method make the measure of that unpopularity so conspicuous, as by quoting an objurgatory passage uttered at the time by the keenest and most malevolent opponent of Ministers, in collation with a parallel and contemporaneous passage by one of the oldest and stanchest of their friends.

Just before the prorogation which constitutionally followed on the Queen's accession, Lyndhurst, in the course of a general review of the reign and session, said :—

“The noble viscount and his colleagues are utterly powerless—utterly inefficient and incompetent as servants of the Crown ; equally powerless, incapable, and inefficient as regards the people. Almost every reasonable man has but one opinion of their conduct. It enlists the pity of their friends, and excites the scorn and derision of the enemies of their country.”

And the following sentences, inserted as a note to one of Sydney Smith's “ Letters to Archdeacon Singleton,” showed that the Whig churchman had not a much higher opinion of Ministers than the forensic renegade from radicalism whom profit enticed into the Tory camp :—

“Lord John Russell is beyond all comparison the ablest man in the whole Administration, and to such a degree is he superior, that the Government could not exist a moment without him. If the Foreign Secretary were to retire, we should no longer be nibbling ourselves into disgrace on the coast of Spain. If the amiable Lord

Glenelg were to leave us, we should feel secure in our colonial possessions. If Mr. Spring Rice were to go into holy orders, great would be the joy of the three-per-cents. A decent good-looking head of the Government might easily enough be found in lieu of Viscount Melbourne; but in five minutes after the departure of Lord John, the whole Whig Government would be dissolved into sparks of liberality and splinters of Reform."

## CHAPTER XI.

SECOND STAGE OF THE EASTERN QUESTION—PALMERSTON  
TRIUMPHANT OVER THE CZAR NICHOLAS.

A.D. 1837—1841.

IT was not to be wondered at that the position and power to which Russia had attained at the period of the accession of Queen Victoria was regarded by Palmerston with the greatest solicitude. That empire exhibited the most extraordinary activity at every point of its frontier—whether in Poland, on the Caspian Sea, at the mouth of the Danube, on the shores of the Bosphorus, or in the valleys of the Caucasus. In little more than half a century she had doubled her population. She had advanced her limits eight hundred and fifty miles nearer to Vienna and Berlin, and four hundred and fifty miles nearer to Constantinople. She had seized the metropolis of Poland, filched one of the most important provinces of Sweden, and advanced her frontier as near to Stockholm as nature would permit. It was aptly observed by a writer of the period at which we have arrived :—"The regiment now stationed at her farthest frontier post, on the western shore of the Caspian, has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onward to Attock in the Indies, and is actually farther removed from St. Petersburg than from Lahore. The battalions that invaded Persia found at the termination of the war, that they were as near to Herat as to the banks of the Don, and that they had already accomplished half the distance to Delhi. They had, therefore, from their camp in Persia, as great a distance to march back to St. Petersburg as onward to the capital of Hindostan."

We have seen in our last chapter Russia, to all appearance, having everything her own way, dealing with her

neighbours as she chose, while the Western powers seemed impotent to restrain her.

We have seen Palmerston, for reasons of policy which he explicitly stated, refraining from calling her to account for her insolent and cruel aggressions alike in Europe and Asia, and suffering attack and unpopularity in consequence. The inquiry whether it had not been better to have, as it were, discounted and anticipated future costly operations directed by Western Christendom against Russia, by striking for Poland in 1830, or in 1836; or by sustaining by something more valuable than mere verbal sympathy the gallant efforts of the Circassians, is one on which a very great deal might be, and has been, said on both sides.

The assailants of Palmerston and England present a case for which, it must be admitted, there is a strong *prima facie* foundation; while not a few considerations—considerations, however, not of the strongest character, for they are of policy rather than of ethics—sustain the opinions and conduct of Palmerston.

Of these, the most important was the fact, of which Western Europe was well aware—and it was a somewhat consolatory one—that Russia, although having so largely extended her boundaries and increased her resources, was nevertheless in the strict sense of the term, *poor*, indisposed to enter upon any contest or aggression more serious than those which engaged her. Accordingly, it was mentioned that the freedom-loving portion of Christendom had better husband their own resources, keeping ever ready to interfere should the ambition of Russia transcend a certain vaguely-indicated line, or should new combinations render necessary an altered and more vigorous policy.

Ere the ratification of that treaty of protectorate over Turkey, executed by the five great powers in conjunction, which completely undid and abrogated the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, and which may be regarded as the concluding phase of the second stage of the Eastern question, as the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi was the initial phase of its first stage.

Ere this crowning triumph of Palmerston's policy was reached, he had effected certain minor, but nevertheless considerable, checkmate restrictions upon the Russian

schemes. Notably, by a very daring act, one inherently indefinable, whose failure would have shipwrecked his career, but whose success greatly redounded to his credit, and advanced his reputation, he most cleverly saved Persia from being the scene of Russian intrigue and the victim of Russian protectorate.

In Persia there was a disputed succession of precisely the same character as those of Spain and Portugal. Palmerston's eyes were as vigilant and well-informed about the intrigues and conspiracies of Teheran and Ispahan as those of Lisbon and Madrid. The dying Persian emperor had exacted a promise from Russia that she should recognize only his rightful heir, a grandson of twelve years, to the exclusion of some forty or fifty of his younger sons (his eldest being deceased), each one of whom would willingly have made himself emperor. Russia clutched at the opportunity of making herself arbiter of so important a question as the right of succession in so rich and alluring an empire. The expected usurpations occurred. Three of the late emperor's sons had themselves proclaimed in different provinces of the empire. Russia hastened to tender assistance to the rightful heir. Her ambassador appeared openly in his suite—but so also did the representative of England, making it obvious to the people of the country that it was not only the great power which touched their northern frontier, but also the mighty Feringhee empire, one of whose mighty dependencies adjoined their opposite limits, who came to do justice and help the legitimate sovereign against his usurping uncles. Nay, more, Muhammed, the youthful emperor, had no money, without which his army could not be put into marching order. The Russian envoy could not assist him, but Sir John Campbell, the British representative, pledged the credit of England for a loan sufficient for all the immediate requirements of the prince. This enabled him to march upon the capital, where he was proclaimed and acknowledged as emperor, amongst others by the most formidable of the usurpers, without the necessity of firing a shot. A British officer, Sir Henry Bethune, being put in command of the imperial army, soon reduced the other competitors. Thus, the genius and promptitude of the English Foreign Secretary, and his ready and efficient agents, prevented

what, but for their energy, would have been a civil war of the most lamentable character, which doubtless would have been protracted until Russia marched in, master of the situation.

The march of the English army into Affghanistan, an incident of far too great importance to be narrated in an episodic and subsidiary manner in a chapter mainly dedicated to another department of our biography ;—the acquisition by England of Karrah, in the Persian Gulf, and the much more important cession to us by the sultan of Aden, upon the Straits of Babelmandeb, must also be regarded as so many Palmerstonian triumphs in his long and keen contest with Nicholas.

Partaking eminently of the same character were commercial treaties concluded by Palmerston with Austria and Turkey, every clause of both of which was not more beneficial to the Christians and Moslems who dwelt on the banks of the Danube, and on the shores of the Adriatic, Ægean and Euxine seas, than directly and assuredly adverse to the plans and purposes of Nicholas. The pertinacity with which, long ere Mr. Cobden made the phrase "commercial treaty" popular and to be heard from every man's lips, Palmerston urged the adoption of these arrangements upon friendly nations, was most admirable. Again and again rebuffed by statesmen steeped in the doctrines of protection, and filled with alarm at the prospect of the introduction into their respective lands of the volcanic torrents of the products of English looms and furnaces, he ever returned buoyantly and undismayed to the charge ; and at last succeeded in producing results of the highest value to England, at once commercially and politically. We confine ourselves here solely to the latter aspect of their beneficial character. While Palmerston was Foreign Secretary, in the years from 1830 to 1840, he concluded fourteen of these commercial treaties. Our present concern is with those effected with Austria and Turkey.

The most important stipulation of the Austrian treaty was that which enacted that the merchant ships of both nations should freely navigate the whole course of the Danube. Russia, by an interpretation of the Treaty of Adrianople justly termed "fraudulent," had succeeded in establishing a control over that river. This stipula-



tion, the fourth of the treaty, established at once, in opposition to the Russian pretensions, the commercial prosperity and the political independence of Austria. It was so interpreted in that empire. Palmerston's genius established the popularity of Metternich, and caused joy to pervade Hungary and the other Danubian constituent provinces of the Austrian empire.

The commercial treaty with Turkey was a still greater triumph over Nicholas. It did much to undo the baneful effects of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi; and—what was perhaps of equal importance—it was universally admitted so to do all over Europe. Christendom keenly watched the contest between Palmerston and Nicholas, and it now began to be admitted that the fortune of war had quite turned, and that the aggressor was losing step by step what he had acquired. By this treaty it was agreed that England, in her dealings with Turkey, should enjoy all the advantages of the most favoured nation; that import, export, and internal duties should be tabulated, fixed, and diminished.

If this had been all, the treaty would have signified no more than an admission of England to a participation in those advantages which Russia had hitherto exclusively enjoyed. But Palmerston was a great deal too far-seeing to imagine that such a supposed national benefit would be otherwise than delusive commercially, and, by raising the envy of Continental nations, operate directly against the political ends he had in view. Accordingly, he had an article inserted in the treaty which formally declared the readiness of the Porte to make similar reciprocal arrangements with any other nation.

All the other Powers, save Russia—who stood sullenly aloof; the best proof of the potency of the blow struck against her machinations—hastened to approve the treaty, and to follow, in their own interests, the example of its authors. The name of "Palmerston" was, by these and concurrent acts of his, made a tower of strength in Europe. Not since Chatham's days had the name of an English statesman carried with it so much power. And the strange spectacle was presented of a man not yet popular in his own land, just beginning to be regarded as a leading public man, whose name nevertheless stood *among foreign nations as representative of, and inclusive*

of, the whole of the English Ministers, and the very country itself. Foreign Ministers of the patriotic and Palmerstonian type, like prophets, are not rarely better known and more highly esteemed in foreign countries—even in those whose policy they frustrate—than in their own.

It was well for the highest interests of England and the world that just at this moment Palmerston should have been so generally accepted as a power and an authority in Europe; for an occasion speedily arose which taxed all his masculine energies. Mehemet Ali had long been preparing for another struggle with the Porte. The leading Turkish statesmen were well aware of it; in fact their consciousness of the fact had operated as their chief inducement to agree to the commercial treaty, hoping thereby to secure more active English support in the case of a renewed rupture with the Pacha. This had been the case on the occasion of the former war between the Sultan and his vassal. It was not long ere the cloud burst. Mehemet refused to pay his annual tribute, and—a much more daring usurpation—assumed the sacred rights of the Sultan as the spiritual head of all orthodox Mahometans, by his interference with the holy cities of Medina and Mecca.

Sultan Mahmoud was very near his death, but his mind reflected in no degree his physical decay. He resolved to fight for his own, and collected a large army on the Euphrates. Ibrahim Pacha assembled a strong force at Aleppo. It at once appeared that the Western Powers must assume quite a different attitude from that which had produced the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi.

If Russia were permitted again to serve Turkey, she would exact this time a much heavier penalty—possibly erect a Sebastopol in the Dardanelles, and reduce the Sultan to the condition of the Great Mogul. Lord Palmerston showed no hesitancy. If he had, he would have committed the very error which he had so cleverly avoided in the much less important case of Persia. He at once informed the Turkish Government that if Mehemet pushed matters to extremity, they might depend upon the active aid of England. France ostensibly was with us. But the Government of that country had become very unsettled. Louis-Philippe had

endeavoured to play the part of dictator to his Ministers. Consequently, one evanescent administration had quickly followed another; and, as the King was known strongly to favour the English alliance, opposition to it, merely for the purpose of thwarting him, had become fashionable with the French people. This did not in any degree deter Palmerston from his determination.

Meanwhile, events in the East progressed. Once more Ibrahim Pacha thoroughly routed the troops of the Sultan; once more the way to Constantinople was open. And to add to the calamity, ere the news of the defeat reached Constantinople, Mahmoud was dead, and the weak and effeminate boy, Abdul Medjid, reigned in his stead. The divergent views of England and France now began to be more apparent, and Palmerston could clearly see that no dependence could be placed in the co-operation of the French. They had recently possessed themselves of Algiers, and worked themselves into the belief that the encouragement, rather than the restraint, of the designs of Mehemet and Ibrahim, was in their interests as African conquerors and colonists. They believed, or pretended to believe, also, that the English wanted Egypt for themselves, and were therefore averse from committing themselves to a line of action which might result in the territorial and military aggrandisement of their ancient rival.

This partly favoured the designs of Nicholas, and crippled and complicated the policy of Palmerston in the contest, which had now arrived at its most exciting crisis. But this new shuffling of the cards, which added France to his opponents, or at least placed it in a position of frigid neutrality, did not make Palmerston faint-hearted or diminish his resolution.

And now a startling calamity befell the Turks, which seemed to make their position hopeless and irretrievable. Within a month after the accession of Abdul Medjid, the Turkish fleet went over in a body to the enemy. This naturally did not increase either the devotion or the discipline of the army, which already had been discovered to be in a most dangerously disorganized condition.

To all these calamities there were further added discord in the Divan and discontent amongst the populace. And *externally*, on one side, there was triumphant rebellion in

Syria; on the other, the looming and lowering cloud of the power who had already dictated the terms of the treaties of Adrianople and Unkiar-Skelessi. There was but one ray of hope for Turkey—it was a bright one, and it proved sufficient. The English fleet on this occasion was in a thoroughly efficient condition; and it was present in the *Ægean* and Levantine waters. Alexandria was menaced by one squadron; another lay ready for any service off Tenedos. It was equally well known at London, Paris, St. Petersburg, Vienna, Constantinople, and Cairo, that whenever either the Egyptian army or the fleet of Russia should approach Constantinople, the English fleet would sail through the Dardanelles and anchor in the Sea of Marmora or the Golden Horn. Palmerston's matchless courage and unwavering resolution at this critical epoch in the world's history are the more wondrous, that it is well known that he acted almost alone. His colleagues most reluctantly and with fear and trembling sanctioned his bold course.

The Government of which he was a member was merely dragging on its existence under sufferance. At any moment he might find himself out of office—leaving a policy just inaugurated to be reversed, or misunderstood and mangled, by some non-sympathetic successor. He knew that he risked his whole reputation and future career.

This did not induce any timidity. He held the helm steadily from first to last, and was as jubilant and resolute at the darkest as at the brightest moment. It is just to a great contemporary and colleague—and, as some will have it, rival—of his, Lord Russell, not to omit to state that while Lord Holland, the inheritor of his uncle's and the old Foxites' philo-Gallican sentiments, led the opposition party in the Cabinet, Lord John Russell stood manfully by the Foreign Secretary, and supported him, both in the council chamber and in the Parliament, in every successive step he took.

France now, fearful of being left behind altogether, and sacrificing her just position in the councils of Europe, again appeared as a personage in the drama. She induced Ibrahim to halt his troops. She also it was who suggested a general European protectorate of Turkey by the Five Powers. And this was indeed a great point gained, for it

transferred to them what had hitherto been exclusively arrogated and enjoyed by Russia.

A conference of these Powers was agreed on, and London selected as its locality. The conference met, and among the very first discoveries which its deliberations evoked, was the fact that France still persisted in taking a view of the question utterly discordant with that of England, and in which the latter was supported by the other Powers—a support accorded with certain sincerity by Austria, and possibly by Prussia, and insincerely rendered by Russia, whose whole purpose at this diplomatic stage of the drama was to widen the breach between France and England; or, we should rather say, to turn what was a mere alienation into an open and irrevocable breach.

To attain this end, Nicholas feigned the most bland and lamb-like moderation, and his representative at the conference, Baron Brunnow, took up the cue from his imperial master with great cleverness and craft. The French plenipotentiary ultimately became the open advocate of Mehemet. He urged that he only could restore the vitality and secure the integrity of the Turkish empire. He was the strong man in the East, and ought to be permitted without interference to play out his predestined part of mayor of the palace.

To add to Palmerston's difficulties, the same opinion was echoed in the House of Commons. But he had not much difficulty, in the free arena of parliamentary debate, in dealing with a delusion that was nevertheless most distracting in the conference. "My honourable friend," said he, "says that if Russia had a person exclusively devoted to her interests in the British Cabinet, he could not have served her more sincerely than I have unconsciously done; that I have been labouring to destroy the Turkish empire, and put an end to its integrity, and subject such portion of it as remains under the nominal sway of the Sultan entirely to the views of Russia. Now, I am bound to say in justice and in candour, that it is impossible for any Government to have acted with more honour and good faith in any matter than the Russian Government has acted with the other powers in respect to Turkey. I feel bound to say this, from a thorough knowledge of all the facts of the case.

"We can only judge of the intentions of Russia from her conduct; and I must say that it is not just to impute to that power that her present conduct has any tendency whatever inimical to the integrity of the Turkish empire. But if Russia really had a desire to destroy that integrity, her readiest tool could not point out a course more likely to accomplish that object than the policy recommended by my honourable friend, because it would lay all that remains to the Sultan prostrate at the feet of Russia or any other power that might wish to attack him. With the best intentions, my honourable friend would pursue a course which, if adopted, must inevitably produce just what is most opposite to his wishes. What would any man say, supposing I were to argue that the best way to maintain the integrity of the British empire would be to make the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland the hereditary sovereign of Ireland and Scotland, because, by so doing, it would more firmly unite the population of the British islands; and that the best friend of the British empire could do nothing better calculated to maintain the integrity of Great Britain than to divide it between two independent sovereigns? And yet that is the policy which my honourable friend recommends."

The remainder of this portion of our narrative must be briefly told. While France sulked, an amusing passage of arms took place between Palmerston and Brunnow. The latter professed thorough identity of policy with Palmerston, and proposed that they should arrange a common programme of action, in case the worst came and Ibrahim marched on Constantinople. In that case, he suggested that a Russian force, not acting as such, but as the representative and agent of the Five Powers, should undertake the protection of Constantinople. Palmerston quite agreed, on this condition, that an English fleet should proceed to Constantinople to co-operate with that of the Czar. After much resistance and a special journey by Brunnow back to St. Petersburg for fresh instructions, he came back with the news that Nicholas consented. Palmerston again had triumphed.

The negotiations had now been going on for twelve months, and the delay had been almost solely attributable to France. She had already been warned that if she

persisted in advocating and pursuing a course entirely discordant with the common feelings of the other conferring powers, they should reserve to themselves the right of acting without her.

Early in the summer of 1840, Palmerston received intelligence from many quarters, and on authority which he deemed satisfactory, that the French ambassador at Constantinople was urging the Sultan to submit to the terms proposed by Mehemet Ali. This determined Palmerston. England and the other Powers at once signed a convention with the Porte, France being neither represented in it nor consulted about it. The popular rage in France was unbounded. War with England was the general cry, which it was feared even Louis Philippe's statement—"While I live there shall be peace between England and France"—could not allay. Palmerston and England looked on with good-humoured and John Bullish indifference; the war-cloud blew over. But the close and friendly French alliance of the days of Lord Grey's government had irrevocably passed away.

By the terms of the convention, Mehemet was summoned at once to surrender Syria and the renegade Turkish fleet. Mehemet refused, and Palmerston at once announced the blockade of the Egyptian and Syrian coasts. Our fleets very soon made most serious impressions. Beyrout surrendered to Stopford. Napier stormed Sidon, and, ever ready for a fight anywhere, marching his tars and marines inland, defeated Ibrahim in the Lebanon. But the crowning glory of the campaign was the wondrous capture of Acre, which was the key to all the military positions of Syria, and to the command of the Levantine shores. It was believed to be impregnable, and under Sir Sidney Smith had resisted all the efforts of Napoleon. Stopford and Napier took it after a bombardment of three hours—a circumstance largely to be explained by the fact that steam vessels of war were here used for the first time, but most galling to the French, and which added fuel to their already enraged feelings against England. After this, it was not long ere Mehemet Ali offered his submission, and succumbed to the terms imposed by the allies. He was allowed to retain Egypt, but Syria was formally and finally restored to the Porte.

*Lord Palmerston's complete arch of triumph had the*

keystone put to it in the treaty of 1841, signed by the Five Great Powers, which formally put Turkey under the general protectorate of Christendom, abrogated the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, absolutely relieved the Porte from its position as a virtual vassal of Russia, and—no mean advantage—held out the hand of reconciliation from Europe to France, who was included in the treaty, though she had been absent from the convention.

One general result of this long and now gloriously concluded anti-Muscovite battle of Palmerston's, and of the splendid achievements of Admirals Stopford and Sir Charles Napier in Syria, was to produce the same respect for the names of Palmerston and England in the East, as had been produced within the last three or four years in Europe. "The fall of Acre had astounded them; in the tents of the Arabs the names of Palmerston and England were whispered with fear and reverence. Who could measure the strength of that nation which had so easily and so rapidly accomplished such mighty results? Unaccustomed to enter into reasons of state, they only judged by what they had witnessed. They saw that Russia remained quiescent, while England acted with energy and decision; and the star of the Emperor Nicholas seemed pale to their wondering gaze, while that of Queen Victoria shone upon them brightly and gloriously from the western heaven."



## CHAPTER XII.

THE SLAVE TRADE.—HOSTILITIES IN CHINA AND CABUL.

A.D. 1835—1843.

**L**ORD PALMERSTON was in his fifty-sixth year when he entered into the holy estate of matrimony. On the 16th of December, 1839, he married the widowed Countess Cowper, who was a sister of his colleague and chief, Lord Melbourne. Rumour hath it that Lord Palmerston had been enamoured of this lady in his early youth and her unmarried days, and that his suit was favourably entertained, but that a wealthier wooer presenting himself in the person of Earl Cowper, Miss Lamb was induced by her relatives to accept the possessor of the higher title and larger rent-roll. Whether rumour in this case be fallacious or no, we do not take it upon ourselves to determine.

Lady Cowper became a widow in 1837, and about two years and a half afterwards was united to Lord Palmerston. Professing in this record to narrate only the public career of Lord Palmerston, we have concern with the private and personal incidents of his life only so far as they affected his position as a politician and statesman. In every sense his marriage greatly enhanced the strength of his position. The mere fact of a public man being married is an advantage. It enables him to dispense, as well as enjoy, the courtesies of hospitality. It adds the influences of "society" to those which specially belong to the political arena. And Lady Palmerston proved a very model of a statesman's wife. It has been frequently and most correctly said, that as she has been by far the most zealous, so she has been the most efficient supporter her husband has had.

In more recent days than those of the period at which *we have as yet arrived*, when Palmerston became premier,

the leader of the House of Commons, and the most popular man who has ruled England since the time of Lord Chatham, Lady Palmerston's Saturday evening assemblies, and the other occasions when guests were received at Cambridge House, while they were in the mere fashionable light the most favoured resorts of rank, *ton*, and genius, so they were also of the utmost political importance and service to her husband.

Amusing stories are circulated about the most virulent Radicals, bound in every limb by anti-Palmerstonian hustings pledges, being converted into the most docile supporters of Ministers by cards of invitation issued by Lady Palmerston to their wives and daughters; and in more than one case, even the conductors of somewhat important journals, deaf to every other form of subornation, are stated to have been turned from the heartiest detractation to the highest eulogy of Lord Palmerston by the blandishments and courtesies of his wise and witty spouse.

The new tie of relationship to Lord Melbourne, the leader of the Whigs, was also a most important service to Palmerston. Ultimately, Lady Palmerston brought to her husband a large fortune. At the time of her marriage it is not probable that she had any other dower than her income under the settlement of her prior marriage. But after she became Lady Palmerston, her two brothers, Lords Melbourne and Beauvale, both of whom were childless, died and, it was understood, left to her all their real and the bulk of their personal property.

Thus Lord Palmerston became a wealthy man; and in no country in the world are the advantages of the possession of wealth by a public man so great as in England. By his marriage, Palmerston became allied with many noble and influential families—amongst others, those of the Earls of Roden, Shaftesbury, Cowper, Lucan, and Bessborough, and with the leading families of which the heads enjoy the rank of baronet,—of the Wombwells and the Milbankes.

Palmerston took no part in the turbulent discussions of the many domestic measures of the Melbourne Cabinet. We have failed to discover that he delivered a single speech on any one of the hotly contested ecclesiastical questions with regard to any one of the three kingdoms, which

formed the staple of discussion, until the final defeat and resignation of Ministers in 1841.

This fact relieves us from the duty of chronicling aught of the general fortunes and ultimate fate of that much badgered administration, save the circumstance that in their appeal to the country in 1841, a large Conservative majority was returned. Adverse votes were soon recorded in both Houses, and Melbourne and his colleagues resigned.

One of the grand objects of the policy of Palmerston while discharging the public duties thus terminated, was the suppression of the slave trade all over the world. With this end, he strenuously endeavoured to induce all nations to acknowledge the right of search. It was an understood thing that any nation which wished to secure in her constitutional efforts the favour and support of England, must concede this. Even Prussia, Russia, and Austria assented to Palmerston's proposal. The United States would not, alleging the pretext of general conditions of international law; but as Daniel Webster's statements abundantly enough showed, maintaining their opposition because they wished to carry on the trade. Subsequent events produced in America the result denied to Palmerston's diplomatic and humane efforts.

When Lord Palmerston had become an octogenarian, he read in the newspapers that a ship's captain was hanged in the "Empire City," from which so many hundreds of slavers had started on their nefarious journeys for carrying on the traffic against which Palmerston's whole life has been a never-ceasing protest; and one of the greatest diplomatic acts of Abraham Lincoln was the recognition of the right of search. We shall give at once the best and the succinctest summary of what Palmerston effected in this holy cause during his second tenure of the office of Foreign Minister, by quoting certain words of his own, uttered in 1838.

"On the accession of the present Government of her Majesty to office, we made a proposition on this subject to the French Government. It was our good fortune on coming into power to make such a proposal as overcame the reluctance of the Government of France to the concession of this mutual right. We proposed that the search in each case should be made by the ship of either

power, not as the ship of war of the country to which she belonged, but by virtue of a warrant given to such cruiser by the Admiralty of the other power; and thus an English ship of war, searching a French merchantman, would do so, not under the authority of England, but by an order emanating from the French Minister of Marine; and, in the same way, a French ship of war would search an English merchantman, not in the capacity of a French ship of war, but by virtue of an order from the Admiralty of England; and thus the ships of both countries became mutually special constables, as it were, to one another, for the purpose of suppressing the slave trade. By this proposal, we got rid of all national jealousy in either state; and it is due to France to say that the slave trade under the French flag has entirely disappeared, and not a single slaver is now found under that flag; France has acted with perfect good faith, and there is no instance in which the French flag has been ever suspected of protecting this traffic, as in the French West Indies for example. It was an article of that convention with France, that the other maritime powers should be asked to accede to the proposal thus made by our Government. We did, in pursuance of that stipulation, make the proposal to them, and most of the powers acceded to it. Denmark, Sardinia, Naples, Sweden, the Hanse Towns, and the Netherlands, have done so. Now, with Sweden and the Netherlands, respectively, our treaties have been to this effect—that there should be established, to represent each of those powers and this country, ‘a mixed commission,’ to adjudicate on the cases of all ships belonging to their flags, or any of them, which might be captured for slave-trading. With regard to this mixed commission, however, so acceded to by Sweden and the Netherlands, France declared that it was against the constitutional principles of her new Government, established or recognized, for any but a French tribunal to take cognizance of cases in which the property or the lives of the subjects of France were concerned; and it was accordingly agreed that French subjects, or French property, taken in this traffic should be handed over to the tribunals of the country to which they belonged. We proposed the same convention to Austria, Prussia, and Russia, not because the slave trade was ever carried on

under their flags, but because we knew that when slavery was driven from the flag of one country, it would take refuge under another; and that so long as any flag sailed the ocean which was not enlisted in a confederation against the slave trade, our labours would not prove effectual. Austria, Prussia, and Russia declared themselves perfectly willing to conclude treaties with England and France; and I can now state, in answer to the question which has been put to me, that the only reason why we have not yet proceeded, to the full, to avail ourselves of the willingness to come into this arrangement so expressed by the three powers I have mentioned, is because our Government has not yet received an answer from France to a proposal which has been made to her, as to granting what we had proposed to Russia, Prussia, and Austria; namely, a more extensive limit with regard to power of search than that which was agreed to in the articles of the convention.

"There will then remain Greece, Belgium, and Hanover, which, I have not the slightest doubt, will also unite with us, as soon as the other three powers of the North, whom I have just named, shall have signed the same sort of convention as that to which France is a party with us. With the Government of Spain we have concluded a treaty as complete as, under the circumstances, could be expected. We have the same treaty with Spain as that which was consented to by the Netherlands and Sweden. The Government has granted everything we asked; more we could not expect.

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"I regret to add that we did not find in the Government of the United States the same willingness to waive national jealousy and national etiquette as was exhibited by France. I do indeed deeply regret this; but I think that the time may yet come, and at no distant period, when a different feeling will prevail in the United States, and when their Government and the people of the country will consider it more an honour to unite with the other powers of Christendom in putting down this abominable traffic, than to stand out on a mere question of etiquette, especially when the arrangement will be such as entirely to save every point of national honour."

The abolition of negro slavery in our West Indian

dependencies had produced great turmoil and irritation among the quondam dominant white caste in the island of Jamaica. They oppressed the blacks by such means—the fruits of their baffled rage—as arbitrary and illegal exactions of rent, by an unjust stretching of the Vagrant Act, by forcible ejectments, and the like. This produced a complete and violent contest between the Provincial Assembly and the Imperial Governor, whose officer was actually hustled and turned out of the House, when he came to deliver a formal “Message.” The home Government took up the matter, and, in the latter portion of the session of 1838, they introduced a bill to suspend the constitution of Jamaica for a period of five years. But Lord Melbourne’s Government had miscalculated its strength. The Radicals and Dissenters had deserted it; the followers of Sir Robert Peel were becoming more confident and jubilant; and it was generally said that nothing kept Ministers in but the favour of the young girlish Queen. In the spring of 1839—the Jamaica Assembly having been first heard by counsel at the bar—the final discussion of the bill was introduced by Mr. Labouchere. On the division, Ministers had a majority of only five, and they forthwith placed their resignations in the Sovereign’s hands. But they were fated, under the peculiar circumstances of the famous “Bedchamber Plot,” to have a further respite. Palmerston and his colleagues were out of office for only a few days. Peel was sent for, and accepted the Queen’s commands to form a Government. The Whig Ministers had surrounded the Queen with their wives and sisters as the ladies of her household; and she, with her notorious warm and affectionate nature, had become exceedingly attached to the noble ladies about her person. Sir Robert Peel informed the House of Commons, when the whole history of the transaction was made public, that the Queen had naïvely told him, at his interview with her, “that she was much grieved to part with her late Ministers.” This was not a very constitutional beginning. But a greater difficulty was yet to come. Sir Robert humbly informed her Majesty that, if he accepted the post of Premier, he should claim the appointment, not only of a new set of great officers of state and of the household, but also the filling up of the positions held by the higher female

attendants and official associates of her Majesty. To such a change she had the highest aversion. She thus wrote to Peel:—

“Buckingham Palace, May 10th, 1839.

“The Queen, having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir Robert Peel, to remove the ladies of her bedchamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings.”

It became known that she had sent for Lord John Russell, expressly put the question whether she was not right in this, and received an affirmative reply.

Sir Robert now declined to accept office.

The Queen gave him permission to explain the whole circumstances in his place in Parliament.

That he was certainly in the right appears from these few sentences in his speech:—

“Sir,—Let me take that particular question on which my chief difficulty would arise. Who can conceal from himself that my difficulties were not Canada; that my difficulties were not Jamaica; that my difficulties were Ireland—[ironical cheers]?—I admit it fully, and thank you for the confirmation of my argument which those cheers afford. And what is the fact? I, undertaking to be a Minister of the Crown, and wishing to carry on public affairs through the intervention of the present House of Commons, in order that I might exempt the country from the agitation and possibly the peril of a dissolution, I, upon that very question of Ireland, should have begun in a minority of upwards of twenty members. A majority of twenty-two had decided in favour of the policy of the Irish Government. The chief members of the Irish Government, whose policy was so approved of, were the Marquis of Normanby and the noble lord opposite, the member for Yorkshire (Lord Morpeth, afterwards Lord Carlisle). By whom are the two chief offices in the household at this moment held? By the sister of Lord Morpeth (Duchess of Sutherland) and the wife of Lord Normanby.”

So Melbourne was sent for again, and brought back precisely the same colleagues as had sat in council with *him before*. Thus Lord Palmerston, who seems to have

had no share whatever in this not very creditable Whig intrigue, shared with his colleagues rather better than two years' subsequent enjoyment of office.

It was in September, 1841, that the Melbourne Ministry was finally dismissed. In that year they appealed to the country, and the result of the elections gave Peel and the Tories the extraordinary majority of seventy-six votes.

On a question of "no confidence," which the Opposition at the earliest convenient date precipitated, the debate lasted four nights. Lord Palmerston took no part in it, the sole questions raised in it being those connected with domestic policy. Ministers were beaten by a majority of ninety-one. They at once resigned, and Peel became for the second time Premier, under more favourable circumstances than almost any one of his predecessors at the head of the Treasury.

Lord Palmerston left behind him as legacies to his successor at the Foreign Office, who was Lord Aberdeen, two foreign wars, neither one of which reflected much credit upon the British name—the opium war in China, and the disastrous belligerency in Afghanistan. Luckily, however, for the reputation of the Whig Foreign Secretary, the infamy of the one war and the calamities of the other are much rather to be attributed to the local authorities at their respective regions than to any member of the Home Government.

One of the chief branches of the East-India Company's trade has been that in opium, grown by them in Bengal, and largely exported to China. When their trading charter expired in 1834, private merchants took up the enterprise, buying the opium from the Company, and conveying it to China. This was a smuggling traffic, for it was illegal by the Chinese law. The English Government at this time sent out officers called Superintendents to regulate commercial intercourse between our traders and the Chinamen. It was distinctly enjoined that they should exercise no political functions; and when Palmerston sent out Lord Napier as "Chief Superintendent," he expressly directed him not to pass the Bocca Tigris, or mouth of the Canton river, in a ship of war, as "the Chinese authorities have invariably made a marked distinction between ships of war and merchantmen, in



regard to the privilege of intercourse." Unfortunately, these and such injunctions were quite disregarded. The rapacity of the English smugglers, in combination with the headstrongness of the English semi-diplomatic representatives, from the highest to the lowest, enkindled a war—if indeed a war it could be called, to which the term massacre was much more applicable.

Matters had gone on with tolerable smoothness up till 1838, when the opium smuggling had reached to such a height that the Chinese Government resolved to redouble its exertions to abolish it. Matters began to look serious, and the English Government, after a long and far from blameless delay in sending any instructions to the Chief Superintendent, Captain Elliot, who had written urgently home for instructions and assistance, at length sent out intelligence of their determination to leave the opium-smugglers to meet the natural consequences of their behaviour, and declining to intervene in any way in their behalf. Unfortunately this wise decision came too late. Already hostilities had broken out, incipiently at least. A certain quantity of opium lying in an English trader's warehouse was seized, and our factories were blockaded until all the opium in the possession of the English smugglers was given up. This was done, and immediately Captain Elliot sent to the Governor-General of India for men-of-war. This was in direct contravention of the declaration of Palmerston, which had just arrived in the Chinese seas, that "Her Majesty's Government cannot interfere for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country to which they trade. Any loss, therefore, which such persons may suffer in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject, must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts."

The war was fairly inaugurated, and we shall not pollute our pages with its sickening details. It is enough to say that we destroyed a fleet of junks, took the island of Chusan, slew a number of Chinese; and with regard to those captives whom we did not slay, our sailors amused themselves by such cruelties as tying them together in sixes by their pigtails.

*At last, a year after Palmerston had left the Foreign*

Office, a treaty was concluded, by which the Chinese paid a large indemnity, opened to our ships and traders four of their chief ports, and ceded to us the island of Hong-Kong.

In spite of the distinct declaration of Lord Palmerston that he would extend no aid or protection to the opium smugglers, the Government of Peel paid over a million and a quarter of money to the owners of the confiscated narcotic.

At this time the north-western frontier of our possessions in India was a great sandy desert extending from the jungles of the hill states of Gurwal to the sea. Beyond this lay the Punjaub, ruled by Runjeet Singh, the old lion of Lahore. Beyond it again, further to the west, lay a region, one of the most interesting in all Asia. From immemorial time it has served as the great highway—alike for trader and conqueror—from Western to Eastern Asia. This country—Cabul, or Affghanistan—lying directly between Persia and the Punjaub, has been traversed by all the great conquerors who penetrated to India from the Mediterranean, the Black and the Caspian Seas.

An old Indian proverb runs that he alone can be Emperor of Hindostan who is first lord of Cabul. Alexander of Macedon had to fight his way through this region, capturing Herat as he went, ere he met and defeated Porus, discoursed with the sacred Gymnosophistæ, and founded a city in honour of his steed Bucephalus on the shores of the Hydaspes. Timour Bec, Mahmoud, the founder of the Mahometan dynasty in India, Nadir, and Baber, all conducted their mighty hordes to India by the same route. It was, and is, the key to India from the north-west.

Although it had been by means of English money and the assistance of British officers that the young Shah had been established on the throne of Persia, he prized the Russian alliance more highly.

So far back as 1835, Mr. Ellis, our envoy at Teheran, reported to Palmerston that this was the case; and what was worse, that Persia, at the instigation of Russia, meditated a hostile movement against Herat, one of the three independent principalities into which the country of the Affghans was divided. This at once excited great

alarm in England, and the more so, as the Ministers of the Shah made no secret to Mr. Ellis of their intention to proceed, after the capture of Herat, to the conquest of the other provinces of the Affghans—in other words, almost as far eastward as the frontier of our Eastern empire. There was not the slightest doubt that Russia was at the bottom of all this. It was notorious that Russian agents were busily at work all through the affected districts, intriguing for their master Nicholas; and the Russian ambassador to the court of the Shah absolutely offered to take command of the young ruler's expeditionary force against Herat.

At last, spite all the remonstrances of the English Minister, the Persian army set out; Russia, now that the mischief was done, and the Shah fairly committed to hostilities, affected to disapprove the step as premature, and counselled further negotiation between the Persians and the ruler of Herat. Further complications were introduced into the embroglio by the expectation by the Affghans of an attack from the side of the Punjaub, by Runjeet Singh. These fears induced them to apply for aid to the Government of British India. But these and all the other intricate details which led to an invasion of Cabul, and the well-known subsequent romantic events with which the names of Lady Sale, Burnes, McNaghten, Keane, Pottinger, Nott, and Pollock, will be for ever associated, as long as the story of English fortitude and valour finds willing hearers—all this sad but splendid chapter in our national history is beyond the strict field of our biography. We must take for granted, then, a sufficient general knowledge of the facts on the part of our readers, and make only such incidental reference to them as is necessary to explain the relations of Lord Palmerston to the military operations which ensued.

None of the disasters in Cabul occurred during Palmerston's tenure of office; and even had it been otherwise, he cannot be held directly responsible for what strictly appertained to the administration of the Governor-General and the Board of Control. So long as he was Foreign Secretary all went well.

In October, 1838, Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, who was, rightly or wrongly, considered as an *especial* nominee of Palmerston, although he was certainly

not the Minister of the Crown responsible for his appointment, declared war, and decreed the invasion of Afghanistan. Runjeet Singh was to act in combination with us. In November he and Lord Auckland met at Ferozepore, the most advanced of our strongholds in the North-West.

This meeting of the two great chiefs, with their magnificent armies and retinues, was a splendid and imposing sight. Thence the armies proceeded. The Bombay contingent had to force its way through Scinde, which territory, and its rulers, the Ameers, were also involved in this composite and complicated matter. At Shikarpore, a place within the boundaries of Scinde, but near the Affghan frontier, they were met by the main army from Bengal. Sir John Keane was appointed to the command of the united host. It now marched forward under the greatest physical difficulties; now wading through artificially flooded rivers for whole days, and then hewing its path through tangled jungles, and all the while with hosts of predatory and murderous Beloochees hovering on its flanks. Candahar was entered, and Ghuznee stormed in the most magnificent manner, and at last the city of Cabul was in the hands of the British. McNaghten was appointed Political Resident. And there also the joyous and too confiding Sir Alexander Burnes took up his residence, all ignorant of the melancholy fate that was so soon to overtake him. All seemed to go well. Everybody at home was satisfied. The general unpopularity of the Melbourne Government was to some extent redeemed by the *éclat* of the campaign; and the whole country gladly approved when the Crown showered honours upon the organizers and leaders of the expedition, when Auckland received a step in the peerage, when Sir John Keane was made a baron, and Pottinger and McNaghten baronets. The disasters were yet to come. They happened under the premiership of Peel and the Foreign Secretariat of Lord Aberdeen, and therefore only indirectly bear upon our present biographic enterprise.

Lord Palmerston never flinched from the responsibility of having approved of the undertaking of this expedition, even at the period of its most disastrous consequences. The case—and we think a fair one—made out by himself and his defenders, was that these reverses sprang solely

from the military mismanagement on the spot, of Elphinstone and others who were subsequently appointed to supreme or subordinate commands, and did not necessarily arise from the nature and character of the expedition itself. The very men who had most loudly applauded the policy of Lord Auckland, when the disaster came, were the most bitter in their vituperation of him and the Whig Government. The clearest statements of facts, the simplest reference to the dates of successive events, could not convince them that Lord Palmerston's foreign policy had nothing to do, either with the military blunders that had been committed, or the dreadful losses of life which naturally sprung from them. It would be just as unfair to attach the blame of the Khyber Pass to Palmerston, as it would be absurd to give Lord Aberdeen credit for the conquest of Scinde. Palmerston, speaking in his own defence, in June, 1842, put the case thus, with a candour and fairness that nothing can get over :—

“I say that all persons who were qualified to form a sound opinion thought that immediate measures were necessary, with a view to secure Affghanistan for British interests. The fact is, that for a great number of years we regarded Persia as a barrier for our Indian possessions ; but of late her policy has changed, and since the succession of the present Shah, the relations between India and Persia have altered, and we have seen Persia disposed to extend her frontier. For a long time we refrained from interference, but at length it became necessary, from the determination on the part of Persia to incorporate Affghanistan in her system of government. It was then the obvious duty of those who had the charge of affairs, to take vigorous measures that Affghanistan might be secured in our favour, instead of being hostile to our interests. Now, sir, it was thought by many to be an adventurous attempt, and, in a military point of view, it was looked upon as extremely difficult. But, sir, there never was a military operation carried on in a part of this country in which there were so many difficulties which have been followed by such easy and complete success. Three years had nearly elapsed since that expedition was undertaken ; during those three years no disaster happened. At last a great disaster did happen, no doubt. *Into the causes of that disaster I will not now enter.*

They are matters of inquiry before competent parties elsewhere, and it would be unjust and unfair of me to fix blame upon anyone. But I may say that this disaster had no more to do with the original policy of these measures, than the wreck of a line-of-battle ship, if we had sent out an expedition three years before, and the line-of-battle ship should be lost unexpectedly in a gale of wind. It would be no proof that the policy of the expedition was not sound and judicious."

This was in reply to Mr. Disraeli. In the year following, Mr. Roebuck returned to the attack, designating—

"The war which has lately been carried on by the English to the west of the Indus, as a war of aggression, and as such, an unjust and impolitic war."

And, not content with a specific charge, he made this general attack upon Palmerston and his policy:—

"I cannot help fancying that if the name of England has been brought into bad odour with the world, the most active instrument in the production of that mischief has been the noble viscount the Member for Tiverton. In fact, if I might, upon so serious a matter, bring forward an almost ludicrous illustration, I should say that the noble lord was best typified by a late production of modern science which is called the lucifer match. No sooner does he meet with an obstruction than a flame immediately bursts forth. He puts his hand upon America, and it required but one move to bring upon us a war that, in all its calamities, would have been equal to a civil war. It was only by a miracle that we were saved from a war with France. It was not owing to anything that the noble lord did not do that we were not thrust into a war with Russia. We had an unnecessary war in Syria—we had an armed body in the Persian Gulf,—Englishmen and those under them have swept the whole plains of Malta, from the banks of the Indus to the confines of the Hindoo Coosh, under the noble lord's pernicious influence, bearing with them all the consternation and all the horrors of war. In short, extending his mischievous activity over the whole habitable world—from the Western Coasts of America to the Eastern Coasts of China (where war absolutely raged)—wherever the English name is known, the hideous consequences of war have been expected to follow. Therefore, I say, that I do look with suspicion

upon every argument and every fact that may be adduced by the noble Lord or those around him, in vindication of the mischievous activity which he has displayed in perplexing and distracting our foreign relations with the world at large."

This was hard hitting—perhaps a little too hard to be effective; defeating, as is the wont of this speaker, his own object, by being rather overdone. It put Palmerston on his mettle, and in the early part of his rejoinder he thus expressed himself:—

"The honourable and learned gentleman accused me of a mischievous and restless activity in the discharge of my official duties. Now, with regard to the term 'mischievous,' I must take the liberty of saying that the honourable and learned gentleman appears to me to have peculiar notions of what is, and what is not, mischievous, and therefore he will pardon me for saying, that his opinion that my official conduct was mischievous will not disturb the conviction of my mind that it was of a contrary tendency. That there was activity the honourable and learned gentleman declares, and we have his unequivocal testimony to the fact. I thank him for that compliment. He says that my 'restless activity encircled the globe.' Why, sir, the interests of England encircle the globe—the sun never sets upon the interests of this country; and the individual whose duty it is to watch over the foreign relations of this country, would not be worthy of his position if his activity were not commensurate with the extensive range of the great interests that require his attention. . . . Men who are in public life, and in the performance of public duties, must expect that from some quarter or another such hard expressions will be applied to their conduct. But it is generally observed that men who use the hardest words are apt also to employ the softest arguments. If this position be true, so far from being surprised that the honourable and learned gentleman should have used hard terms in speaking of me and my late colleagues, my only wonder is that, considering the softness and weakness of his arguments, he did not put greater strength into his interpretation. . . . I must say that it would be a strange proceeding (Mr. Roebuck having moved for a committee of inquiry into the hostilities in Afghanistan), if, after

four years had been allowed to elapse, not only since the occurrence of these important events in India, but even since the late Government had laid the case fully before Parliament—no attempt having been made to condemn the late Ministers when they were in office, and when they had all the means of defence which official documents could furnish them—these matters should now be made the subject of inculcation. It would, I say, be most extraordinary if parties were to lie in ambush during four years, and then to come out with an attack upon persons whom they might have assailed when in power, but on whom they deferred their assault till placed in a different position, and of course with less means of defending themselves."



## CHAPTER XIII.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF PEEL; PALMERSTON OUT OF OFFICE.

A.D. 1841—1846.

WE have now to contemplate Lord Palmerston in a light somewhat different from any in which he has hitherto come before us. From the day when he first took office as Junior Lord of the Admiralty in the Administration of the Duke of Portland, down to the present time, Palmerston has been out of office in all about ten years—during the premierships of the Duke of Wellington and the two premierships of Peel, during the latter few months of the premiership of Lord John Russell, and during the two short periods when Lord Derby was First Lord of the Treasury. Of the aggregate composed of these several terms of absence from office, about half is composed of the five years of the second Administration of Peel, lasting from 1841 till 1846; so that Palmerston has been almost as long out of office at this epoch of his career as he was at all others combined, since he was first as a young man called upon to serve his sovereign. So far as the stir of diplomacy and the mad exhilaration of battle were concerned, this was one of the dullest epochs of our national history.

Sir Robert Peel was a peculiarly pacific man, and his Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Aberdeen, even more so. England, too, wanted rest, after the excitement of her Spanish Legion, Acre bombardment, China war, and Indian hostilities. Peel, besides, had the working out, during those years, of the greatest combination of fiscal changes which were ever effected within so small a number of years in the history of any country. Accordingly, the history of our foreign policy during these years is peculiarly barren of great events. Questions about the

Right of Search and the Slave Trade, and the settlement of our long-standing disputes with the United States about our respective frontiers between Maine and New Brunswick, and in the district of Oregon, added to some incipient bad blood with France about her outrage upon an English consul in Tahiti, and some suspicion of her designs in Northern Africa—these, and these only, formed the staple of the themes in that department which he had made so peculiarly his own, on which Palmerston addressed the House while he spoke from the Opposition benches.

But these topics by no means exhausted the range of his oratory. He became now, for the first time in his career, quite a frequent speaker on all manner of subjects. We hope the metaphor is not irreverent—at all events, nothing could be further from our intention—but we can hardly peruse the free and unrestrained speeches, great and small, which Palmerston delivered during these years, without likening him to a noble steed, which had long been girt in the panoply and engaged in the turmoil of war, turned out in a peaceful interval into green and unaccustomed pastures, and luxuriating in the new and almost forgotten freedom there to be enjoyed. Palmerston spoke on all manner of subjects. We subjoin a list of the themes of certain of his speeches at this period of his life, to give some idea of the extent and variety of its range.

In fact, it may be said, that on no leading topic of legislation, whether of the first or secondary grade of importance, while Peel was Minister, was Palmerston silent. This last goes far to prove our statement—the distress of the country; Lord Ashley's admirable and much-needed Bill for the better regulation of mines and collieries; bribery at elections; the Ashburton Treaty, in which he differed very decidedly with Ministers, alleging that Lord Ashburton was not the proper man to send, and that Daniel Webster had defrauded him and the English people; Lord Ellenborough and his absurd bombastic Somnauth proclamation; the affairs of Servia, about which there was very great risk of a European war breaking out in 1844; the outrage on Mr. Pritchard at Tahiti, and the reparation exacted by the English Government; the Greek Loan, and the *émeutes* at Athens which com-

pelled King Otho to keep his word and grant his subjects a Constitution, thereby putting Czar Nicholas in the sulks; the state of Ireland; the Protestant Bishopric of Jerusalem; the affairs of Scinde; the suppression of the Slave Trade, in which Lord Palmerston made more than one speech of at least three hours' duration—for him a remarkably rare and exceptional thing; our relations with Brazil; the imprisonment of Don Carlos; the Inclosure of Commons; duelling in the army, and the question whether the ordinary pension should be granted to the widow of an officer killed in a duel; gaming, and the question of recovering by law debts incurred at play; the Sugar Duties; the shipping interest; France and Morocco; the Income Tax; Maynooth College, on the question of the permanent endowment of which he reproached Sir Robert Peel with acting, as usual, too late even when he was doing an act of justice and right; railway accidents; and national defences. Truly a sufficiently large and discursive range of legislatorial oratory.

From so large a budget of material we must content ourselves with making a selection of but a very few of the more interesting and important topics. For it does not consist with our plan to dwell with nearly as much prominence on those periods of Palmerston's career when he was out of office, as on those in which he had the responsibility of a Minister, and a large and leading share in moulding the destinies of his country, as well as merely the opportunity of unfolding his views and recording his votes in Parliament.

Lord Ellenborough's ridiculous fiasco about the gates of Somnauth was far too good an opportunity for so able a strategist and parliamentary gladiator as Palmerston to allow to pass by unnoticed. As far back as 1831, Runjeet Singh had promised to one of the competitors for the Crown of Herat, that he would furnish him with aid to enforce his claims on three conditions; one of them being that the sacred sandal-wood gates of the Temple at Somnauth which the invader Mahmoud had carried off to Ghuznee a thousand years before, should be restored. This was declined. Lord Ellenborough had these gates removed, and restored to the Temple of Juggernaut at Somnauth; and then he issued an extraordinary proclamation, congratulating the Hindoos on the return to them

of relics so sacred, and so intimately bound up with their ancient religion. This act was regarded with great horror in England, the religious community alleging that it was open patronage of idolators; while others took the very sensible view that Ellenborough was fawning upon one body of her Majesty's Indian subjects, while he equally insulted another. His lordship indulged in a few more vagaries, and he was suddenly recalled. His behaviour was the frequent subject of discussion in both Houses. In one of the debates Palmerston took a leading part, expressing without any stint the ridicule and contempt which the whole affair had bred in his mind.

"We object to the proclamation, on the ground that its language is altogether unworthy and unbecoming a great public functionary. My right honourable friend beside me compared it to some of the bulletins of the earlier part of the French Revolution—in which he slightly erred, as the noble lord opposite has shown. It does not appear to have been taken from the bulletins of so early a period. It is rather from the bulletins of Bonaparte, who certainly was, as the noble lord says, pre-eminently fitted for the government of empires. Napoleon, says the noble lord, was able to command large bodies of men, and rule the destinies of millions; and therefore we ought not to blame Lord Ellenborough for imitating his example. We have heard of those who thought that by holding their heads on one side they would be thought wise as Aristotle, or that by stuttering they could rival Demosthenes. If Lord Ellenborough wished to rival the genius of Napoleon, I think he might have found a better subject for his imitation than his bulletins, which excited the ridicule of all sensible men.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Even if this vote should have the effect of bringing him home, however inconvenient his return might be in some quarters, I think that so far as the interests of India are concerned, they will be in less danger from his speeches in Parliament than from his measures as Governor-General of India."

On more than one occasion during the Administration of Peel, Lord Palmerston, at the close of each session, gave a long and elaborate—and not seldom derisive and

jocular—review of the measures of Ministers during the year, and especially those relating to foreign policy. In 1842 he sarcastically moved for a return of “the names and titles of all the public bills that had been brought into the House of Commons during the present session of Parliament, the date at which the order for bringing in each bill was made; and also the dates at which the said bills passed through their several stages.”

He made a most amusing speech, from which we can only present a few carefully-selected titbits:—He hoped that the Duke of Wellington would add another wreath to the laurels that graced his brow (alluding especially to his Grace’s complicity in Catholic Emancipation), and confer commercial emancipation upon his country also. He then referred to the disappointment which the rank and file of the Tory party felt, when they discovered that their leaders had no sooner comfortably seated themselves in the Downing Street arm-chair the year before, than they proceeded to adopt Free Trade measures. “Alas!” he said, “how vain is human wisdom, how short the foresight of even the wisest men! when a few months passed over their heads, the songs of triumph were changed into cries of lamentation. The very parties whom they had selected to be their chosen champions—the very guardians whom they had armed with power for their defence, turned their weapons upon them, and most inhumanly, and with unrelenting cruelty, struck blows, which, if they have not already proved fatal, must, in all probability, lead sooner or later to their utter extinction.”

How prophetic this was, the triumph of the Anti-Corn Law League, and the disruption of the Tory party, only four years later, sufficiently proved. And then, still further to irritate the squires and “farmers’ friends” on the back benches of the Speaker’s right hand, he showed them that Peel’s growing conversion to Free Trade principles must have been no sudden thing, but the result of long meditation and gradual development of opinion.

“It is not to be supposed that her Majesty’s Ministers applied themselves between the 3rd of September, when they entered office, and the 3rd of February, when Parliament met, to the study of Adam Smith, Ricardo, McCulloch, Mill, Senior, and other writers of the same kind. No; it is clear that the opinions which they have

so well expounded in the present session must be the result of long meditation—of studies deliberately pursued during the ten years of comparative leisure, which even the most active opposition affords; and that they must have come into power fully imbued with all the sound principles, the enunciation of which has excited so much admiration on this side of the house. In one respect, the conduct of right honourable gentlemen opposite, before they entered office, is open to animadversion. The right honourable baronet opposite (Peel) accused me, upon a former occasion, of too much assurance; now I am going, not to retort that charge, but to complain of his over-modesty. I complain of the over-modesty of the right honourable baronet and his colleagues in this, that upon many occasions when, they being out of power, matters came under discussion in this House, to which the principles they have lately arrived at were fully and plainly applicable, their modesty—for it was that, no doubt, prevented them from doing themselves full justice, inasmuch as, by practising an over-scrupulous reserve, they really conceal from the public the progress they had made in their studies.”

Lord Stanley (now Lord Derby) had charged the late Government, and Lord Palmerston in particular, with having created embarrassments for their successors in every part of the world. To this Palmerston retorted, that he considered Stanley a good enough off-hand debater, but no more. He reminded him of a celebrated Minister of a foreign country, who was giving instructions to one of his agents as to the language he should hold with regard to the conduct of another Government. The agent, having listened to the instructions, ventured in a submissive manner to insinuate that the language he was ordered to hold was not, perhaps, strictly consistent with the facts—nay, indeed, might be said to be rather at variance with facts. The answer was, “Never mind what it is about; it is a very good thing to say, and mind you say it.”

The noble lord was in a similar condition, speaking of facts with respect to which he was wholly misinformed.

“I had, indeed, hoped,” he continued, “that in regard to foreign affairs, it would be admitted that we had bequeathed only facilities to our successors. (A laugh from the Ministerial benches.) What! do you laugh at

in the anti-Reform Bill time, which might be taken as the very creed or gospel of Free Trade. How early he imbibed the sentiment—whether from his preceptor, Dugald Stewart, or from his friend and colleague, Huskisson—we cannot say. At all events, he kept his pledge to Peel. As far at least as Palmerston was concerned, Peel *did* “have the cordial support of the Opposition in their march of improvement,” when he was “deserted by a powerful body of his own friends.”

Palmerston made many luminous Free Trade speeches on the minor fiscal measures of Peel, and on the great climax of the Repeal of the Corn Laws. He gave to Ministers a loyal and generous, and—by the intrinsic politico-economic merits of his speeches—a most valuable and weighty support. He ridiculed the absurd idea of endeavouring to exclude slave-grown sugar on humanitarian grounds; showing (as Cobden, by the way, also did with similar force and clearness), that if this principle were carried out to its legitimate conclusions, and applied to such articles as coffee, rice, pepper, the precious metals, &c., the whole trade of the country would be stopped. He proved to demonstration what the Protectionists thought to be the self-apparent paradox that—

“It is precisely *because* we have great establishments, *because* we have a heavy debt, and *because* we must have a large revenue, that we cannot afford to keep up the system of protection.”

With his wonderful power of making hard things simple, he asked:—

“If we are compelled to take from every man in the country a large portion of his yearly income to supply the demands of the public service, is that a reason why we should, by artificial means, purposely make everything which he wants to buy with the remaining part of his income as dear and as bad as we can?”

And when the grand crowning victory came, Palmerston vied with Peel in attributing its honour and credit to the man, Richard Cobden, to whom it was chiefly, nay almost alone, due—an act, it must be observed, the more noteworthy and generous, that Cobden was already known to be perhaps the most ardent opponent of the Palmerstonian foreign policies that existed in England, even Mr. Urquhart not being excepted. In the discussion which

ensued upon the resignation of Sir Robert Peel's Ministry in 1846, Palmerston said :—

“The right honourable baronet has paid a just and deserved compliment to the name of Richard Cobden. When the House and the country look to the highest point in the history of these events, they will see the name of Richard Cobden—a man distinguished by great zeal and enlightenment in advancing a great and important change in our commercial code, and a man likewise who presents in his own person a distinguished result of that Parliamentary Reform, which has produced this among other great results.”



## CHAPTER XIV.

PALMERSTON FOREIGN SECRETARY FOR THE THIRD TIME.

A.D. 1846—1852.

IN December, 1845, Sir Robert Peel, believing it to be impossible to secure unanimity in his cabinet on the subject of the Corn Laws—the Duke of Wellington being, it was believed, his especial difficulty—placed his resignation in her Majesty's hands. She at once summoned Lord John Russell, who was at Edinburgh, and who at once came post-haste to London. There being a large Conservative majority in the Lower House, which had been returned at the general election of 1841, he at first declined the responsibility of assuming the Premiership. But the Queen told him that Sir Robert had left with her a paper, avowing his readiness "in his private capacity to aid and give every support to the new Minister whom Her Majesty might select to effect a settlement of the question of the Corn Laws." This altered the case entirely, and after a good deal of correspondence with the Queen, and having received through Sir James Graham all the information on which the late Ministers had acted, Lord John proceeded to the task of the formation of an administration. But he had hardly commenced his negotiations when an unexpected and insurmountable difficulty occurred. Lord Grey would not enter the cabinet along with Lord Palmerston. He disapproved of the principles and plan of his foreign policy, and would not share a joint ministerial responsibility for it. Without Lord Grey, Lord John came to the conclusion that his cabinet would have no chance of standing. He therefore

resigned the task, and Sir Robert Peel returned to office.

In the succeeding June, when Peel finally resigned, this difficulty was overcome. Lord John felt himself stronger, now that the Corn Law question was settled, and the Conservative party irremediably broken up, and no longer a firm and dominant phalanx.

When Lord John became Premier of England for the first time, Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary for the third. Lord Grey's scruples, too, would seem to have been removed, for from the first formation of the cabinet, he sat at the council-board with Palmerston, holding the office of Secretary for War and the Colonies.

Lord Palmerston's third term of office as Foreign Secretary was indeed a troublous and exciting time. It was his fate ever to be in office when the elements of discord were abroad, either throughout Europe or in certain parts of it, or in more distant regions; and as soon as he resigned, or his party were defeated, and he was for a time out of office, foreign politics were in a state of lull and security.

The two years of his absence from office while the Duke of Wellington was Minister—the period intervening between his service under Canning and his enlistment into the Whig ranks—were the years of repose which separated the turmoils of the Holy Alliance from the turmoils called into existence by the Revolution which seated Philippe of Orleans on the French throne. The five years of Peel's Premiership, and of the Foreign Secretaryship of Aberdeen, had been distinguished by nothing more stirring than the visits of Louis Philippe and the Czar Nicholas to the English Court, with their important political accompanying circumstances; the Ashburton Treaty, and some negotiations about the right of search and the slave trade. But Palmerston was hardly warm once more in his old and accustomed seat, when he returned to it in 1846, ere the dogs of war were once more let loose all over Europe. Ere he, five years after, resumed his seat as a private member, the Chartists and the Irish rebels had played out their ridiculous careers at home; the quarrel of the Spanish marriages

had come to a head, and effectually and for ever alienated England from the Orleans dynasty; the independence of Cracow had been extinguished; the novelty of a reforming Pope had appeared, he had repudiated his reforming tendencies, been expelled, and restored by the arms of republican France; Novara had been fought and won, and the abdication of the heart-broken Charles Albert effected; revolutions had taken place, and been repressed in every German state; Hungary had arisen, imperilled Austria, and been beaten down again by the cruel intervention of the Czar. In every one of these important occurrences, and in many others of minor import, was Palmerston as Foreign Secretary of England implicated in some way or other; and in some of them very intimately.

We must content ourselves with a very brief—but we trust compendious—summary of the chief of these transactions in so far as Palmerston was officially, and as the representative of his country and its fundamental principles of policy, associated with them.

We shall not encumber our pages with anything beyond the briefest and most cursory reference to the question of the Spanish marriages, of which so much was said and written at the time, and which would now have but very little historic importance, but for the circumstance that it caused that permanent and irremediable alienation between the Courts and Cabinets of London and Paris, but for which the three great powers of North-Western Europe would not have ventured upon the extinction of the liberties of Cracow—the only remnant which had been suffered to remain of the gallant ancient kingdom of Poland. It had been the standing policy of England—and indeed of the other European powers—ever since the war of the Spanish Succession and the Treaty of Utrecht which followed it, to provide against the possibility of the contingency or coincidence arising, of a union of the crowns of France and Spain in the person of one sovereign, whether of the Bourbon or of any other family. Husbands were to be provided for the young Queen of Spain and for the Infanta, her sister. It was obvious that Louis-Philippe—a mean, avaricious old man, with an *intense passion* for his own and his family's aggrandize-

ment—had made up his mind to violate this old standing European compact, and to link his own progeny by the closest ties to the Spanish princesses, whom Palmerston, and not he, had placed on the throne of Spain. In the intrigues for the accomplishment of this object, he employed the crafty Guizot as his ready and appropriate tool. These intrigues went on for a long time. So far back as 1842, Guizot had stipulated that, whenever the Queen married, it must be a prince of the house of Bourbon.

He attempted to show that the English Minister preferred the rival claims of one of the Coburg family. But Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston equally denied the imputation, and there is abundant documentary evidence that the latter actually expressed disapprobation of the suggestion when it spontaneously proceeded from the Queen Mother of Spain. To study brevity,—in the autumn of 1846 it was suddenly announced that the Queen would marry her cousin, a prince of the blood royal, and that her sister would become the wife of the Duke of Montpensier, the youngest son of the King of the French. Both the young women were married on the same day, and it was said that the consent of the Queen was wrung from her by French emissaries at a discreditable midnight orgie, and that no time for reflection should be permitted, and that the royal intention was authoritatively notified in the *Gazette* of Madrid the day succeeding the reluctantly and discreditably extorted acquiescence. The peculiar foulness of this transaction was understood to lie here—at least so the loudly expressed indignation, not only of England, but of Europe, interpreted it—that as the husband forced upon the Queen was not only the object of her seated aversion, but possessed of no qualities likely to conciliate her esteem, there was the more likelihood of the throne being eventually filled either by the Duchess of Montpensier or her offspring.

From the date of this transaction the close friendship between England and the Orleans dynasty, which Palmerston had so indefatigably exerted himself to promote, and which he had endeavoured by every effort in his power—sometimes under great difficulties—to maintain

unbroken, was for ever gone. The French people, too, were quite as disgusted as Palmerston and the English, and it is more than probable that the unregretted Nemesis which befell the King not very long after, sprang more from this cause than from all others put together. It is unwise to indulge in conjectural surmises of a retrospective character; but we think it to be at the very least a matter of feasibility to suppose that 'Austria, with the connivance of her two brother spoliators, would not have proceeded to the annexation of Cracow and to the horrid atrocities which she perpetrated on the unhappy Galicians, if the *entente cordiale* between England and France, which Palmerston had established, and on which Aberdeen so highly felicitated himself and the country, had still remained in existence. Palmerston as fearlessly condemned the three western courts as he had without stint or qualification expressed his opinion of the hypocritical Government of France. Her Majesty's speech in 1847 openly declared the annexation of Cracow to be "a manifest violation of the Treaty of Vienna;" and Palmerston in his place in the House said:—"It was impossible to deny that the Treaty of Vienna had been violated by the late transactions at Cracow. The Treaty of Vienna must be upheld; it could not be permitted to any Government to pick out with one hand the articles of a treaty which it would observe, and with the other the articles which it was determined to violate; and he therefore hoped that the Governments of Austria, Russia, and Prussia would recollect that if the Treaty of Vienna was not good on the Vistula, it might be equally invalid on the Rhine and on the Po."

No good came of the Spanish marriages. It seemed as if the good work which England had done for the Peninsula—by the agency of Wellington, Canning, and Palmerston—was to be all undone by this fatal infusion of Orleanist blood. Reactionary ministers were called to the royal councils; the pretender, Don Carlos, chose the occasion to reassert his claims; and a chronic state of misgovernment recurred. Palmerston thought a rebuke necessary, and he administered the following, which, we think, is as pretty a piece of diplomatic outspokenness (about its prudence we pronounce no opinion)

as ever proceeded from the bureau of Minister of State. It was written in 1848, after the abdication of Louis-Philippe. The letter was addressed to our ambassador at Madrid :—

“ Sir,—I have to recommend you to advise the Spanish Government to adopt a legal and constitutional system. The recent downfall of the King of the French and of his family, and the expulsion of his ministers, ought to indicate to the Spanish Court and Government the danger to which they expose themselves in endeavouring to govern a country in a manner opposed to the sentiments and opinions of the nation ; and the catastrophe which has just occurred in France is sufficient to show that even a numerous and well-disciplined army offers only an insufficient defence to the Crown, when the system followed by it is not in harmony with the general system of the country. The Queen of Spain would act wisely, in the present critical state of affairs, if she were to strengthen her executive government by widening the bases on which the Administration reposes, and in calling to her councils some of the men in whom the Liberal party places confidence.”

There were revolutionary movements all through Europe in 1848. The previous year—1847—had been considered and designated as one of “constitutional reform.” But the Paris revolution of 1848 occurred, and set Europe a-blaze. At the solicitation of the Pope and the petty potentates of Italy, Lord Minto, in 1847, had made a journey in that classic land. He was the agent of Palmerston. The objects of his mission were—to attain sound freedom and avert revolution. But he failed. He failed, as Lord William Bentinck had failed thirty years previously, in solving the problem of the junction of Italian liberty with Italian order—a problem which has puzzled the brains of many great men, from the days of Machiavelli or even Dante until our own times, but which at last has been solved by the genius of Cavour, and by the sympathetic assistance of such men as Palmerston.

In Hungary, too, in 1848, there was a revolutionary

movement. Palmerston, for wise reasons of state and prudence, would not actively implicate the arms of England directly in the encounter; but when Kossuth and his patriotic compatriots sought refuge in Turkey, and when Austria, acting as the tool and the vassal of Russia, demanded their extradition and surrender, Palmerston not only maintained the Porte in its policy of protection to the fugitives, but sent the English fleet to Besika Bay to back the protest, to cow the Czar, and sustain the Divan.

This matter was settled. The Czar and the Kaiser retracted their demands, and the English fleet, under Sir William Parker, was enjoined by Palmerston to call, on its way back, at Athens; for the Greek Government had been heaping indignities on many English subjects, and inflicting actual injuries on some. The British fleet, under its admiral, answered to the rudder. Palmerston was called to account for the alleged bullying character of his foreign policy, with regard to Greece specifically, but also, generally, in respect of his whole political career. There was an adverse vote, at the instance of Lord Derby, in the House of Lords. It was necessary that this should be rectified and neutralized in the other branch of the legislature. Mr. Roebuck made a motion, which was practically one of confidence in the foreign policy of Palmerston.

On this motion, the most splendid debate which ever occurred in the English House of Commons took place. Thesiger, Gladstone, Roebuck, Palmerston, Graham, and Cockburn made speeches, of which it is enough to say that the speech of each was worthy of its utterer. The vote of the House cleared Palmerston of all imputations. And, with a peculiar and delicate courtesy, within four days of the address which he himself delivered in this debate (protracted over four nights), a portrait of himself, painted by an eminent artist, at a cost of five hundred guineas, was presented to his wife by a deputation consisting of members of the House of Commons, who represented many more of his legislative admirers.

But although this victory seemed to be complete, *satisfactory*, and apparently final, it proved otherwise.

When members met in 1852, the great curiosity was to know why it was that Lord Palmerston was no longer a member of the Cabinet. He had resigned in the recess, and was once more—a rare thing for him—a private member. Once the Parliament met, it all came out. He had “recognized” Louis Napoleon as Emperor of the French immediately after his *coup d'état*. “The Court,” which is the fine and equivocal English for the Royal family, objected to this, and also took a general objection to the manner in which he discharged his official duties. So he was requested by the premier, Lord John Russell, to resign; and he accordingly resigned.

He soon had his revenge. There were fears—fears which we now can say were ludicrous—of an invasion of England by the French. Amongst other measures of precaution and protection, Lord John Russell introduced a Militia Bill, authorizing the enlistment of a certain number of men to serve *locally*; that is to say, in their own peculiar locality. Palmerston moved an amendment, to the effect that the militia should be *general*; that is, that militiamen should be legally transportable from one barracks to another all over the kingdom. This was a very small matter, but it was enough to wreck a weak and tottering Ministry. The Tories voted with Palmerston, and Lord John Russell, taking, constitutionally, the vote as one of want of confidence, resigned his post of premier.

Lord Derby came in but did not remain long. Palmerston, who had brought Derby in, turned him out. He proved himself another Warwick—a king, or rather, a ministry-maker. An enormous majority sustained a resolution of Palmerston's affirmative of the principles of free trade (and he had a right to move it, for he had been one of the earliest of the free traders); and Derby went out, and Aberdeen came in.

In Lord Aberdeen's Administration, Palmerston was Home Secretary, an office entirely new to him. But he astonished everybody by the vigilance, care, intelligence, and originality with which he discharged its duties. The standing monument of that period of Palmerston's career is the system of granting “tickets-of-leave” to convicts



—a system much aspersed, but which has purified our colonies of the taint of convict transportation; which recognizes the broad humanitarian doctrine that criminals have a capacity of reformation; and of which, generally, posterity, and not we, must judge.

## CHAPTER XV.

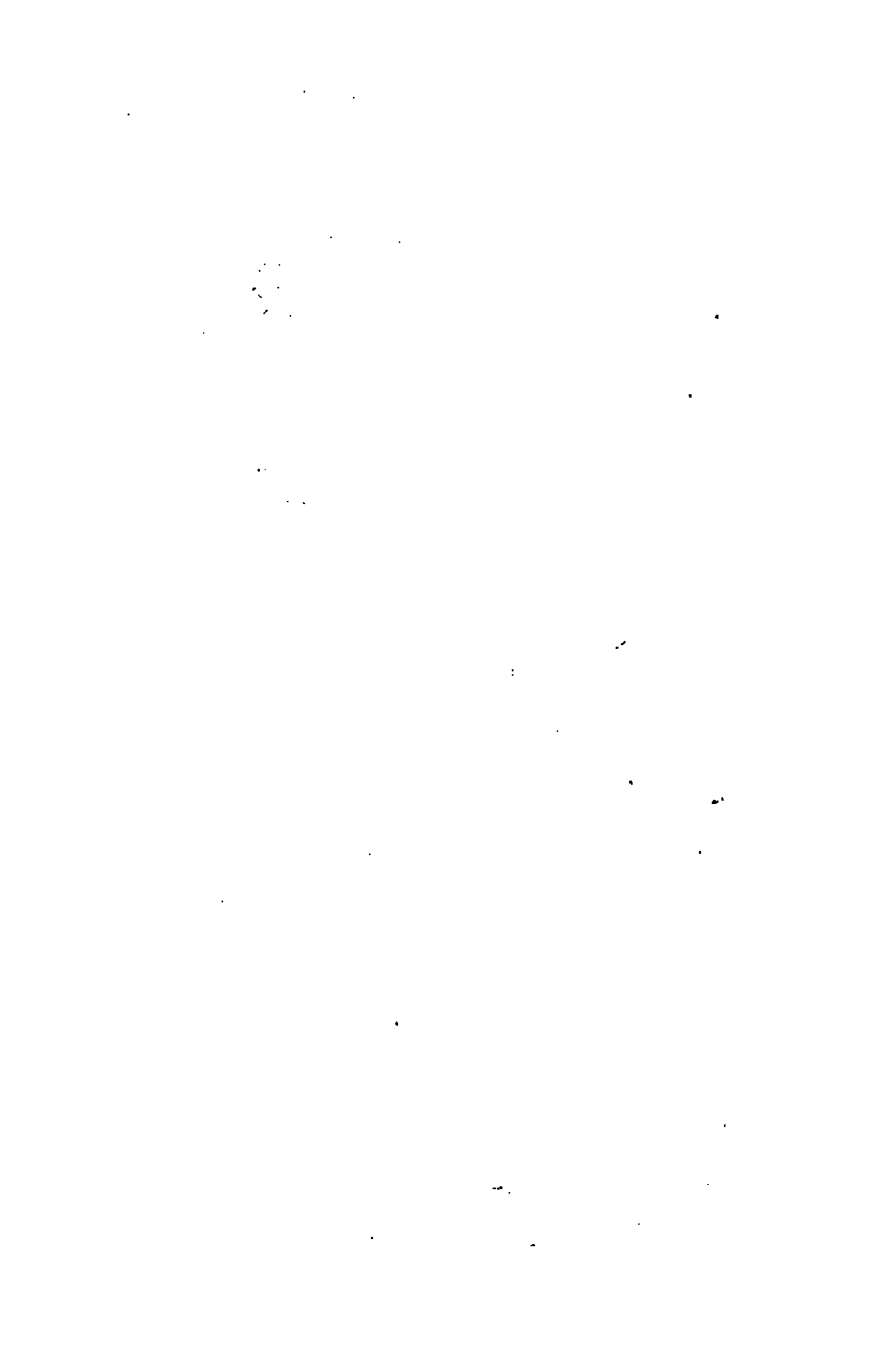
## PALMERSTON PREMIER OF GREAT BRITAIN.

ENGLAND suddenly found herself at war with Russia. As Lord Clarendon put it, we "drifted into the war;" and as Tennyson put it, "the long, long canker of peace was over and done." It was felt that Aberdeen was not the man to be at the helm. He was a pacific minister. Our war was being mismanaged. The administrative reformers were crying out, and holding their Drury-lane and other meetings. The general demand was that Palmerston should be the "pilot to weather the storm." He accepted the national trust, and became in his old and mature age Premier of the British empire. Lord John Russell had resigned on account of "the impossibility of denying that the condition of the army is horrible and heart-rending." Palmerston had higher courage—he assumed the premiership; and the task of bringing England clearly and fairly out of her dire difficulty. Patriotic ever, as he had all along been, he was patriotic then. He talked very fairly in answer to aspersions concerning the conduct of the war, about "the natural inexperience arising from the long peace;" but at once set himself to carry the war to a successful end. And he did so. Czar Nicholas, Palmerston's old antagonist, died broken-hearted ere the issue was determined. And at last, after the heroism of Balaklava, Inkermann, and Kars, the end came; the Treaty of Paris was signed, and the pretensions of Russia humbled. Palmerston was the victor.

The rest of our task, and, indeed, much that has immediately preceded, pertains to current and contemporary history. We therefore introduce not the story of Sir John Bowring's China war, of the "Conspiracy Bill," or of the "Willis's Room Compact." Enough for us to say, *that Palmerston has been chosen by the nation to be at*

the helm, and is still at the helm. He is, even in recent years, a pilot who has weathered for us many storms. He has kept us out of war. He has kept us in prosperity. We Englishmen ought, indeed, to esteem him as dearly and as fondly as he esteems and loves his native land. As Sir Robert Peel said, in the very last speech he uttered ere he died,—“we are proud of him!” His history has been ours for half a century. No shot has been fired for the honour and glory of England without Palmerston being the cannoneer. No fiscal reform which has given the people a cheap loaf, more wages, greater certainty of the receipt of these wages, and a larger general enjoyment of the blessings of life, has been effected without Palmerston being its abetter and acting assistant. If it were not impious to be idolatrous, one could almost be so about such a man—a man who will go down to posterity, not only as the most astute and clever, but as the most patriotic and England-loving man who ever dedicated high talents to high ends.

THE END.





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